
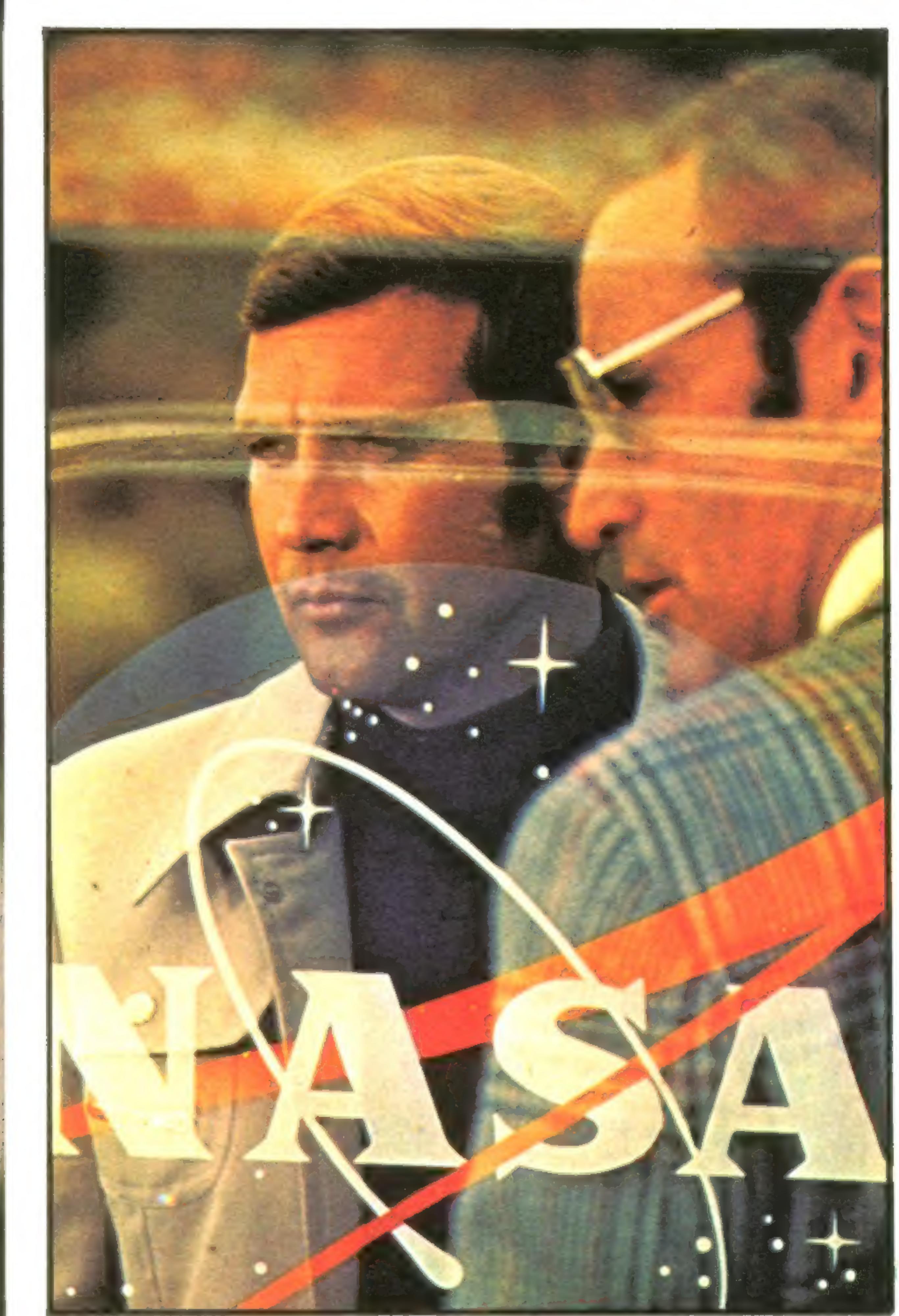


The **Six Million Dollar Man**

annual 1979



Authorised edition based on
the popular Television Series



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THE
SIX MILLION
DOLLAR MAN
annual 1979





The Long Sleep

OSCAR GOLDMAN nudged the attractive blonde who was sitting next to him. She turned and looked at Oscar who nodded his head towards Steve Austin. The girl smiled, for Steve was sitting with his eyes closed and looked for all the world as if asleep. In fact, nothing could be farther from the truth, for Steve, even though his eyes

were shut was enjoying the concert as much as anyone in the Hall.

Oscar and Steve had come to the concert to listen to Vladimir Marwodski play Mozart's Piano Concerto, not because they particularly liked classical music, but because Marwodski had recently defected to the West from his own country behind the Iron Curtain. While

he was being interrogated by Oscar's department, Steve and Oscar had come to like the strange, quiet Slav who spoke as softly as he was now playing. When Marwodski had invited them to attend his first recital in America, both men had accepted his invitation with pleasure.

The music gradually came to its moving climax and when Vladimir had played the last note, the applause was deafening. Vladimir rose slowly and, with one hand resting on the piano, acknowledged the tumultuous applause.

Suddenly his hand flew up to his neck and he slumped on the floor. The audience gasped – their cries of "Bravo" sticking in their throats. Only Steve Austin's bionic eye had noticed the strange pipe appear from behind the curtain and the dart fly across the stage into Vladimir's neck!

The audience were speechless as the man sitting in the front row of the stalls suddenly rose to his feet and bounded up on to the stage in one leap. He leant over the collapsed figure who, moments before, had held the crowded hall in rapt attention.

As if from nowhere, two men dressed in white overalls appeared, carrying a stretcher. No one who saw what happened next could actually believe it. One of the stretcher bearers brought his flat hand down in a karate chop on the back of Steve's neck and before Austin had fallen to the floor, Vladimir had been bundled on to the stretcher and rushed off the stage.

Less than an hour later, Steve and Oscar were sitting in Oscar's office.

"We knew that they would try something to get Vladimir back," said Oscar. "But we didn't think they would try anything quite so daring."

"But lots of their musicians and dancers have defected," said Steve. "What makes Vladimir so special?"

"You didn't know this, Steve, but Vladimir is not only a brilliant pianist, he's also one of our top agents," Oscar lifted a file from his desk as he spoke and handed it to Steve.



"We had warning that his cover was about to be blown, which is why we arranged for him to defect. I'm sorry that you had to be kept in the dark, but the men at the top wanted as few people as possible to know."

Steve was scanning Marwodski's file. "Pretty impressive record," he said as he closed it.

"Isn't it! Not only has he given us some of the most valuable information we have ever had, but he also knows the names and locations of our top agents in Europe. If the other side get that information from him, and they will, unless we can get him back, we'll have to scrap our entire European operation and start again from scratch."

Steve frowned. "He's probably on his way back already. What can we do?"

"We know that they haven't left the country yet. The entire East coast is fogged down and no aircraft or ship has left in the past day, let alone the last hour. Also, we've put a road block round the city, so we know he's still in the area somewhere. You've got to find him, Steve, and bring him back to us."

"Any ideas where to start looking?"

"He's probably being held at their Embassy. They know we can't get near him



there. We've put a twenty-four hour watch on it. Get down there, Steve."

Steve left Oscar's office and made his way along a succession of long, faceless corridors until he reached the underground parking lot. He sat behind the steering wheel of his car and switched on the car radio. The newscaster's voice crackled slightly, "Speculation is mounting as to the whereabouts of Vladimir Marwodski, the recently defected pianist, who mysteriously collapsed at the Albany Hall this evening after giving a triumphant account of Mozart's Piano Concerto . . ."

The newscaster ran through the rest of the news as Steve drove along the quiet streets towards the Embassy. When he arrived he parked his car in a dimly lit street and made his way round to the back of the high-walled garden. Making sure that no one could see him, he bent both his knees and forced himself upwards. The incredible power in his legs carried him clear over the wall and he landed softly on the damp soil on the other side. In the distance he heard a dog bark.

He crept silently up to the Embassy building. He looked up towards a lighted window. The wall was covered in ivy and in a trice, Steve was half-way up. He stopped suddenly and froze where he was. He heard the door of the room he was making for shut and a

voice say, "He's still sleeping. When the fog clears we'll get him to the Airport and back to our country."

A man with a thick, mid-European accent answered. "Idiot. You don't think the Americans will let us get him out as easily as that, do you?"

"What do you suggest . . .

Without warning the ivy that was supporting Steve snapped and he tumbled to the ground.

"What was that?" the man with the accent shouted. "Guards! Guards!" He rushed to the door shouting instructions. In an instant the whole garden was alive with men running backwards and forwards, dogs frenziedly barking, lights flashing and voices shouting contradictory instructions.

Steve had landed awkwardly. When he tried to stand up, although he felt no pain, his leg would not bear his weight, and buckled under him. He blinked as floodlights were switched on. He felt naked and defenceless as he sat in a glaring sea of light. Only a few seconds passed before he was surrounded by six armed soldiers, jabbering excitedly at each other in a strange-sounding language. He was dragged to his feet and pulled through a side door into the Embassy.

The man standing before him was dressed

in military uniform with several medals decorating his tunic. His hair was cropped very short and he wore, thin rimless glasses. Steve noticed that he wore a leather gauntlet on one hand and suddenly realised that he was in the presence of Koblaski – top brass at the Embassy and known to be in charge of the Embassy security staff.

"Colonel Austin, isn't it?" Koblaski said. "I believe that we met at a British Embassy reception recently. To what do we owe the pleasure of this unexpected visit?"

Without waiting for an answer, Koblaski snapped his fingers and uttered an instruction to one of his men. The man moved towards Steve and forced him into a chair. A door opened and a small man appeared carrying a black bag. Before Steve could say anything, the small man fumbled in the bag and brought out a syringe. He approached Steve and plunged it into his arm. The whole world started to swim before Steve's eyes. He tried to stand up but all he could do was sit there and wait for the drug to take its course. The last thing he remembered seeing was Koblaski's face breaking into an evil grin, then he gasped and slumped back in the chair.

* * *

Embassy it would be tantamount to an act of warfare. All we can do is wait. And that's an order!"

When Steve regained consciousness it took him some time to realise where he was. Then he slowly started to remember the events of the previous evening. He was lying flat on his back, in total darkness, on a soft, silky material. He tried to sit up but his head banged into something solid. He moved to his right, but the same solid material stopped him. It was the same on his left hand side. "So this is what it's like," he said



Oscar arrived at his office very early the next morning expecting to find Steve there with a report on Marwodski's whereabouts. When he hadn't turned up by nine-thirty, Oscar began to feel worried. He reached for the telephone and soon Steve's description had been flashed to all the policemen in town.

An hour later Steve's car had been found, but there was no sign of Steve. Oscar decided to try to do something. He went along the corridor to his superior's office and explained the situation. "Oscar, there's nothing we can do. Even if we had definite evidence that Colonel Austin was inside the Embassy, we couldn't do anything. Embassies are more or less foreign soil. If we violated their



softly to himself. "I don't suppose many men have wakened up in their own coffins." He tried to move his legs and found that whatever had been wrong with them the night before, seemed to be all right now. "What do you know, self-healing bionics!" He wondered if he would ever see Oscar again to tell him that his legs were self-righting.

"Well, I can't lie here for the rest of my life," he thought. Summoning all his strength he forced the lid up. He managed to open it enough to look out. A solitary guard was sitting with his back to the coffin. Before the guard knew what was happening, Steve was out of the coffin and had his hand over the guard's mouth. One blow rendered the guard unconscious. Steve rapidly stripped the guard of his uniform and ripping off his own trousers and jacket and shoes, he quickly dressed in the guard's tunic, breeches and boots. He pulled the guard's cap well down over his face and bundled the prone soldier into the coffin, throwing his own clothes over him. Taking no chances, he searched around for a screw driver and secured the lid. He looked around the bare room and saw a second coffin in the corner. Before he had a chance to do anything he heard footsteps in the passage outside. The door opened and Koblaski and seven guards entered.

"Te fornici da Monnato siflita," Koblaski said to the men, without looking at Steve.

Four of the men made for one coffin and the three others crossed the room towards the other.

"To, siflita," Koblaski said, and taking a deep breath Steve joined the three men at the second coffin. Koblaski, seemed satisfied and left the room. The seven soldiers started to lift the coffins. Steve raised his corner on to his shoulders and followed the others as they carried the coffins out of the room. A large black limousine was waiting for them at the front door of the Embassy. Fortunately the coffin was between Koblaski and Steve and as they slid the coffins on to the back of the car Koblaski turned and went back into the Embassy.



The most senior of the soldiers opened the driver's door and got into the car. The six other soldiers went back into the Embassy.

"Slo venka mant albadarski," the driver shouted at Steve and beckoned him to the passenger's door. Not knowing if he was doing the right thing Steve opened the door and sat down beside the driver. The car moved off down the drive, and the large, wrought iron gates swung open to allow the car through. Steve was horrified to see that four policemen on motor cycles took up positions – two at the front and two at the back, obviously to escort the car to its destination. Steve did not know what to do. If he tried to wrestle with the driver there would undoubtedly be an accident and Marwodski, apparently in a drugged sleep in one of the coffins, might be injured.

Fortunately the driver did not say anything as they drove on. Steve soon realised that they were making for the airport. The familiar landmarks zoomed past and still Steve did not know what to do. He wondered how the Embassy had arranged a police escort for the very person the American

government was anxious should not leave the country. The driver leant forward and switched on the radio. The same newscaster whom Steve had heard the previous evening was recounting the day's events for the benefit of the public. "A fire last night in the Croatian Embassy destroyed the Ambassador's bedroom and drawing room. The cause of the fire has not yet been established but apparently the Ambassador's wife was overcome by fumes and the Ambassador insisted on going in to try to rescue her. They both died as a result . . ."

The driver changed the station and soon the car was filled with raucous pop music.

"Cho vleilsta da Rock," he said turning to Steve.

Steve nodded his head, not knowing to what he was agreeing, but the driver only grinned and returned his attention to the road.

"So that's it," thought Steve. "They've told the authorities that the Ambassador and his wife are in the coffins. They must want Vladimir quite a lot."

The car turned into the airport approach



road, and came to a halt outside the main entrance. The driver switched off the engine and both Steve and he got out. Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps came forward to meet them. Steve recognised several Ambassadors and their wives, all dressed in sombre black. A group of U.S. Marines moved towards the car and started to lift the coffins on to their shoulders. One of the women in the crowd sniffed heavily into her handkerchief.

The driver beckoned Steve to stand beside him. The Marines lined up behind them, the flags draped over the coffins fluttered gently in the breeze. The representatives of other governments took up their positions behind the Marines. The party made its way

through the terminal building and out on to the runway.

A small jet bearing the insignia of the Croatian People's Republic was on the runway, obviously waiting to wing the two coffins back behind the Iron Curtain.

Steve suddenly stumbled and rolled over on to his back. He somersaulted backwards and in doing so tripped the party of marines carrying the first coffin. It tumbled on to the tarmac and rolled over, its lid falling off. Some of the women screamed as a half-dressed man and a bundle of clothes spilled on to the ground. Somehow the Marines managed to control the second coffin and placed it, not too gently, on to the ground. Several of the Marines drew their revolvers and fired at Steve who dived behind the empty coffin. The bullets smashed through the wood sending a hail of splinters into the astonished crowd.

"Now look here," the clipped tones of the British Ambassador rang out.

"Oh be quiet Geoffrey, and let's get away quickly, it's too awful to watch," his wife screeched, burying her head in his shoulders. The Italian Ambassador had already reached the safety of the Terminal building when a second salvo of gunshot rent the air. Steve leapt from behind the coffin and sprang over the Marines' heads. "Don't shoot, I'm American," he shouted as he landed. "If you look in the other coffin you'll find Vladimir Marwodski."

The soldier who had been driving the car was running towards the waiting aircraft. In two gigantic strides Steve caught up with him and threw him to the ground. "Stop Koblaski," he screamed pointing towards the aircraft. The engines of the jet were revving up and Steve looked up to see Koblaski's angry face peering from one of the windows. Even before Steve rose to his feet the 'plane began taxiing along the runway leaving the flight steps isolated on the tarmac, looking like a diving board in the middle of a desert.

The engines reached a climatic roar and the 'plane left the ground steadily rising

into the air until only Steve could see it in the distance.

* * *

"What'll happen to the soldier," Steve asked Oscar later that evening as they left the hospital where Oscar had been visiting with Vladimir.

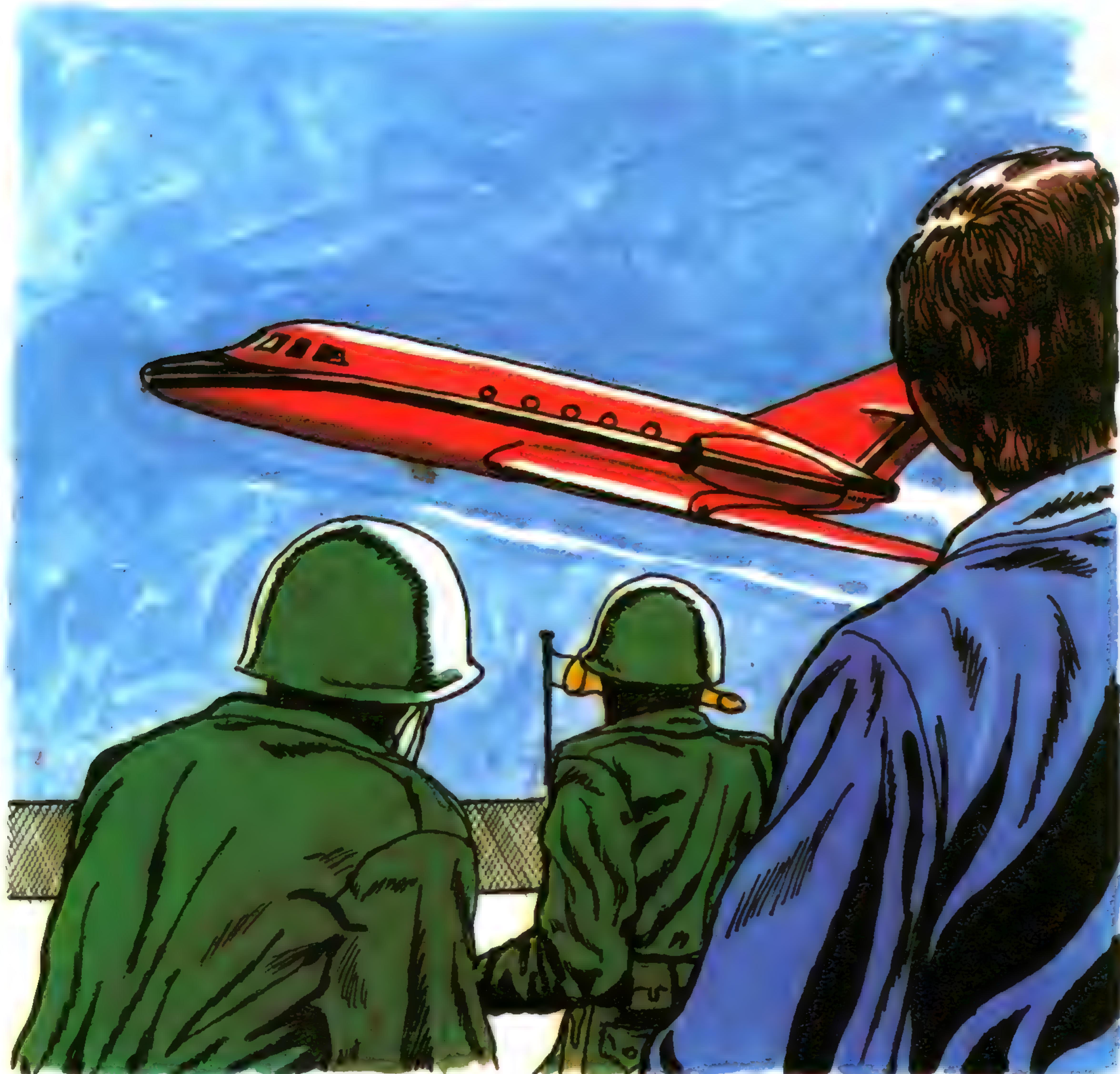
"Nothing," said Oscar, shaking his head slowly. "His government will claim diplomatic immunity for him and we'll have to hand him over. By the way, the British Ambassador's wife is arranging a private

recital by Vladimir when he's fully recovered. He was beaten up but he's not too badly injured. You and I have been invited to the Embassy to hear him play. It seems that Lady Handforth was so impressed by your athletic ability she's longing to meet you."

The two men reached their cars. "Shall I accept the invitation on your behalf?" asked Oscar.

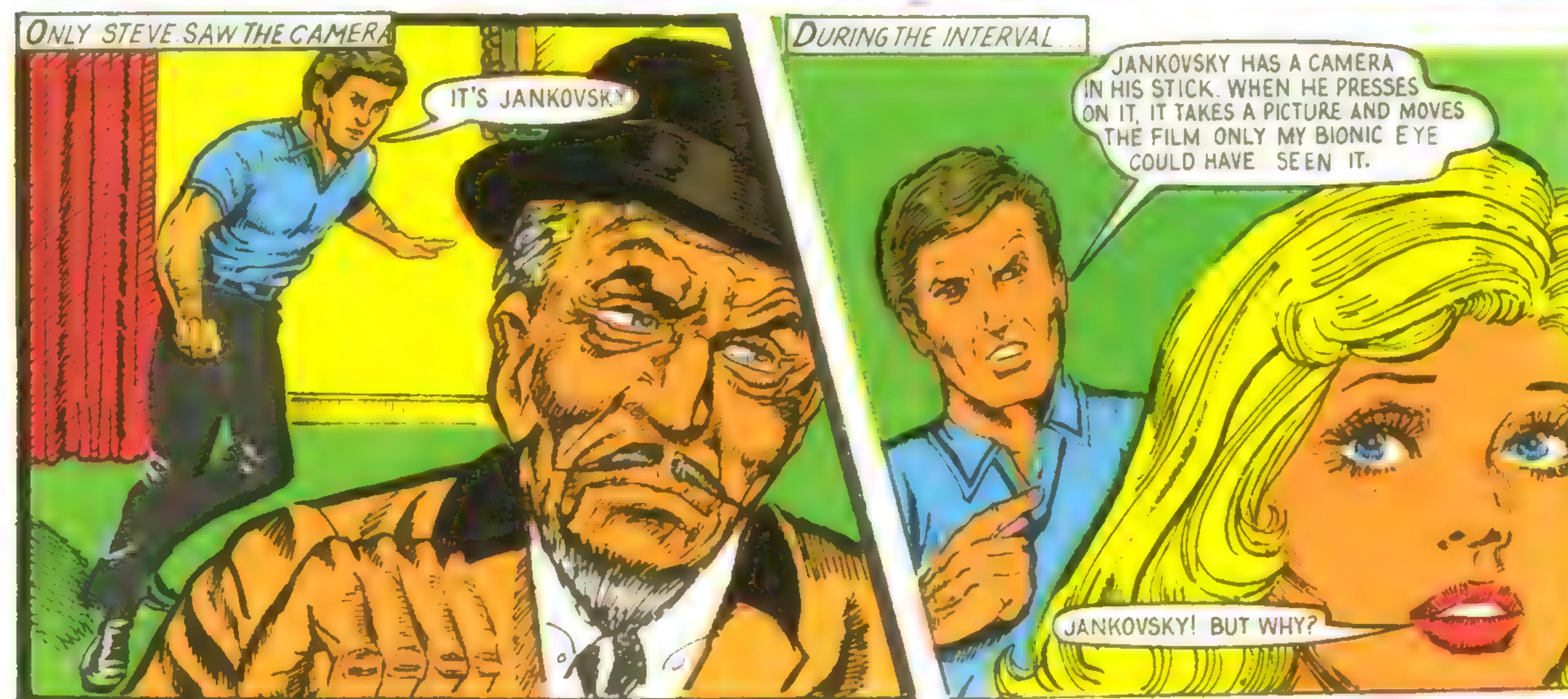
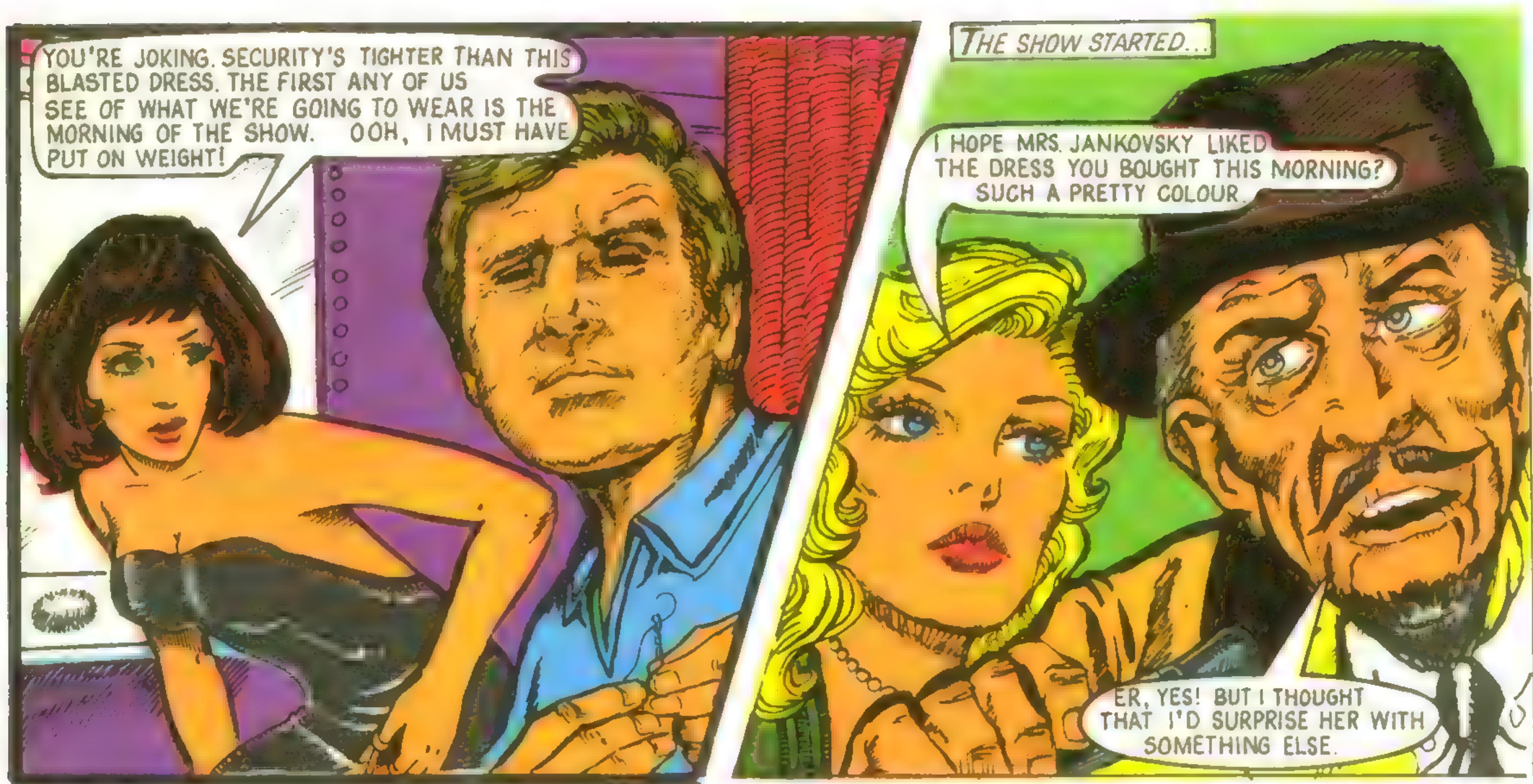
"Yes, you do that Oscar," said Steve.

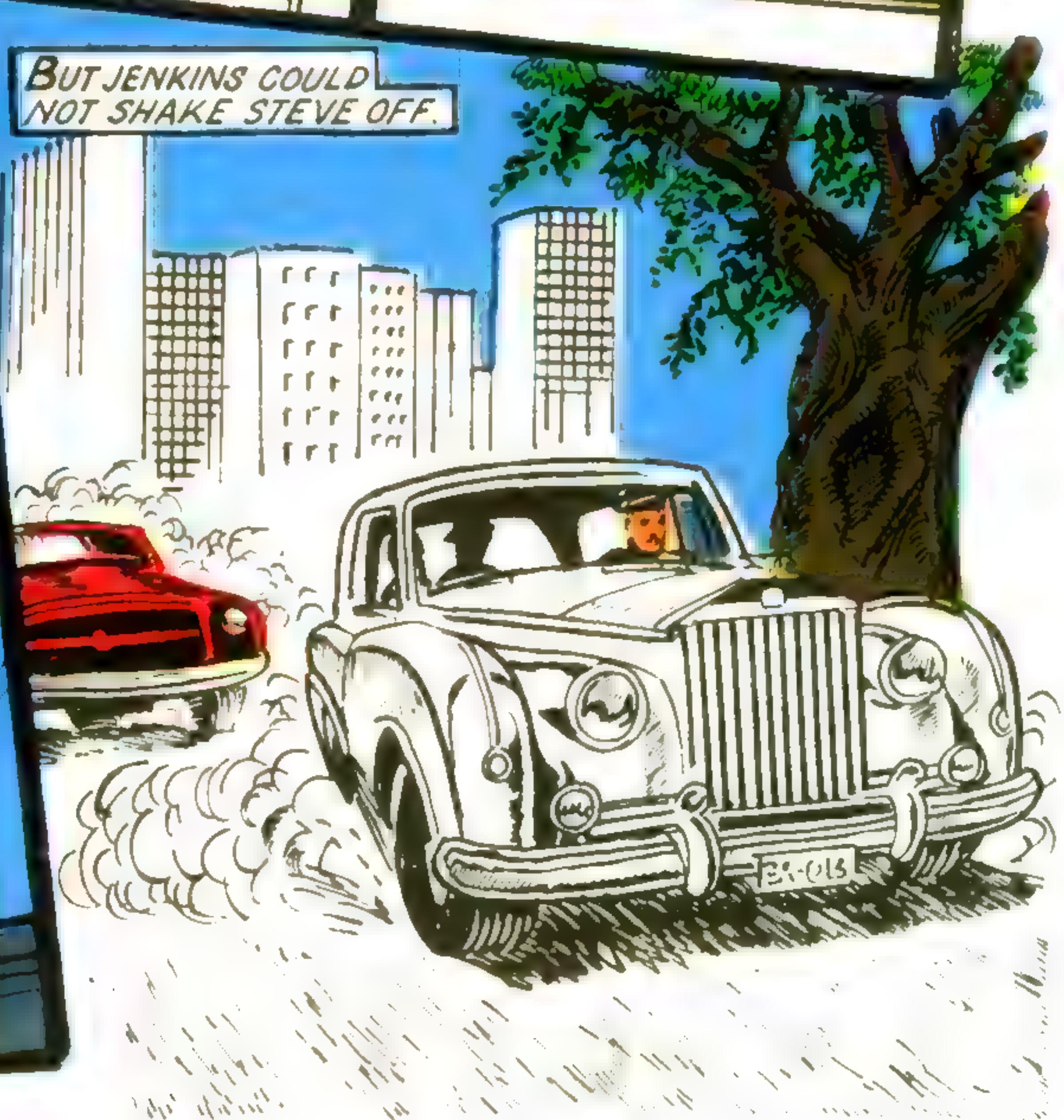
"It seems that Lady H. asked if he would play the Mozart Piano Concerto, but Vladimir refused. He said that the last time he played it, it gave him a pain in the neck!"



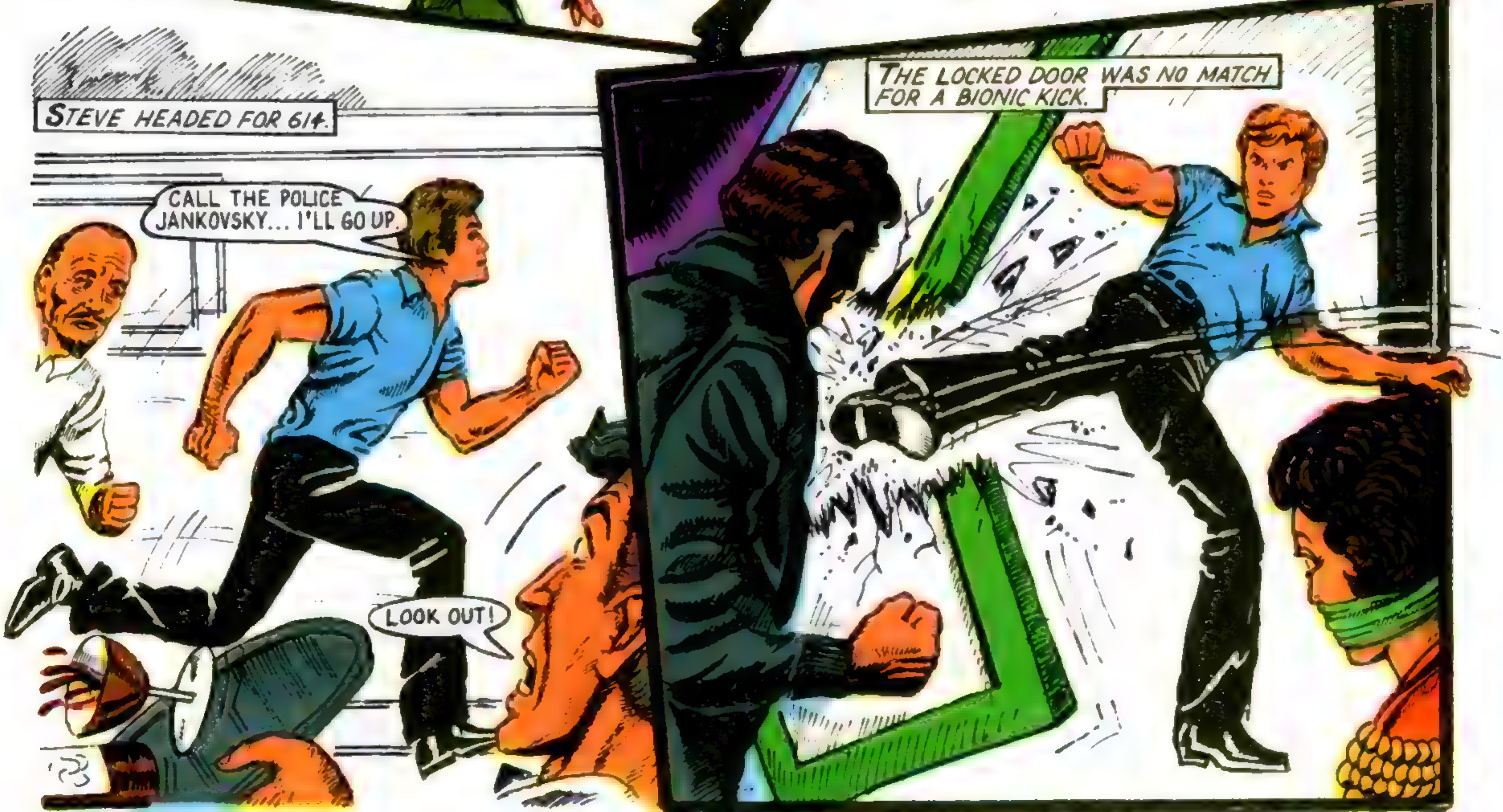
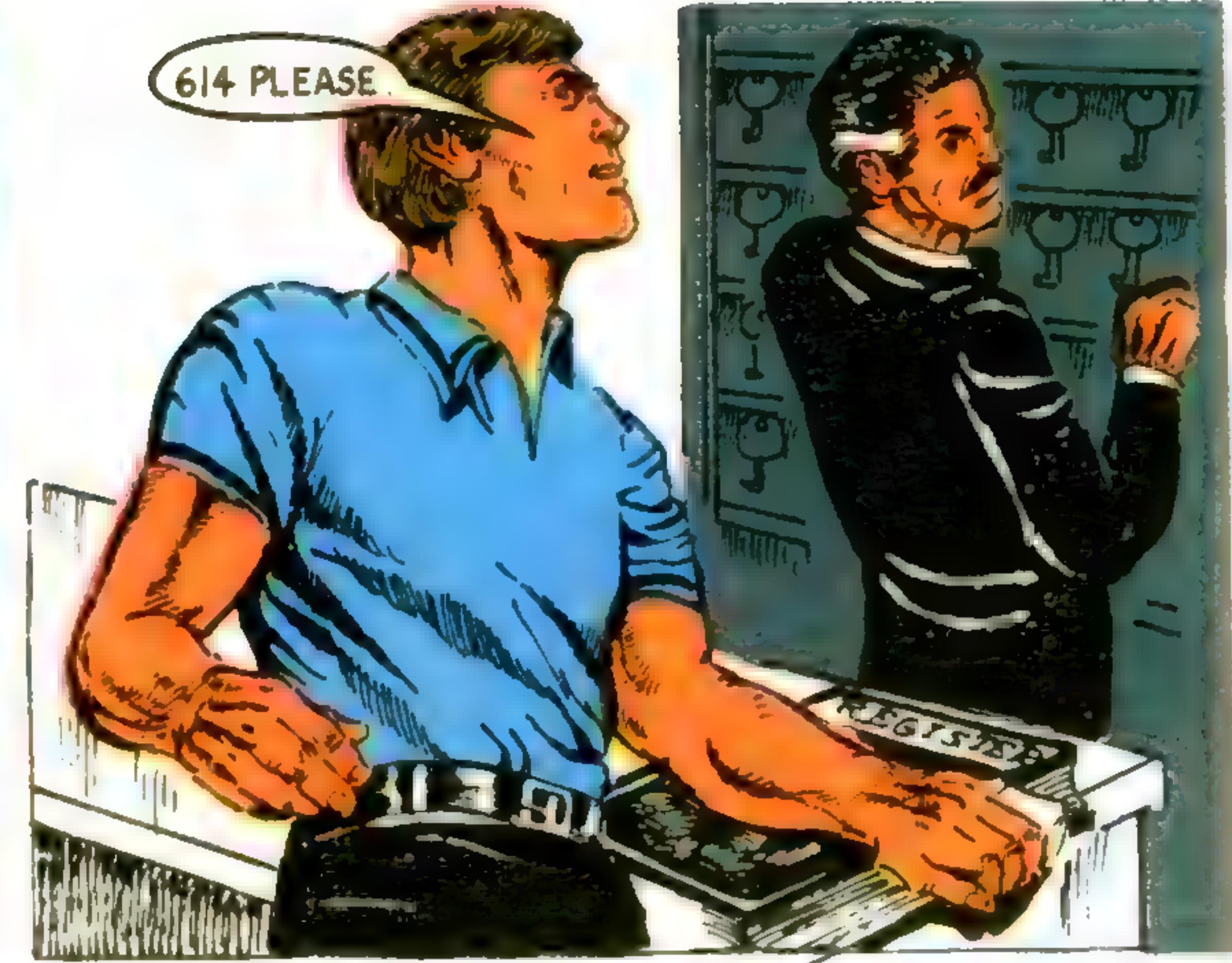
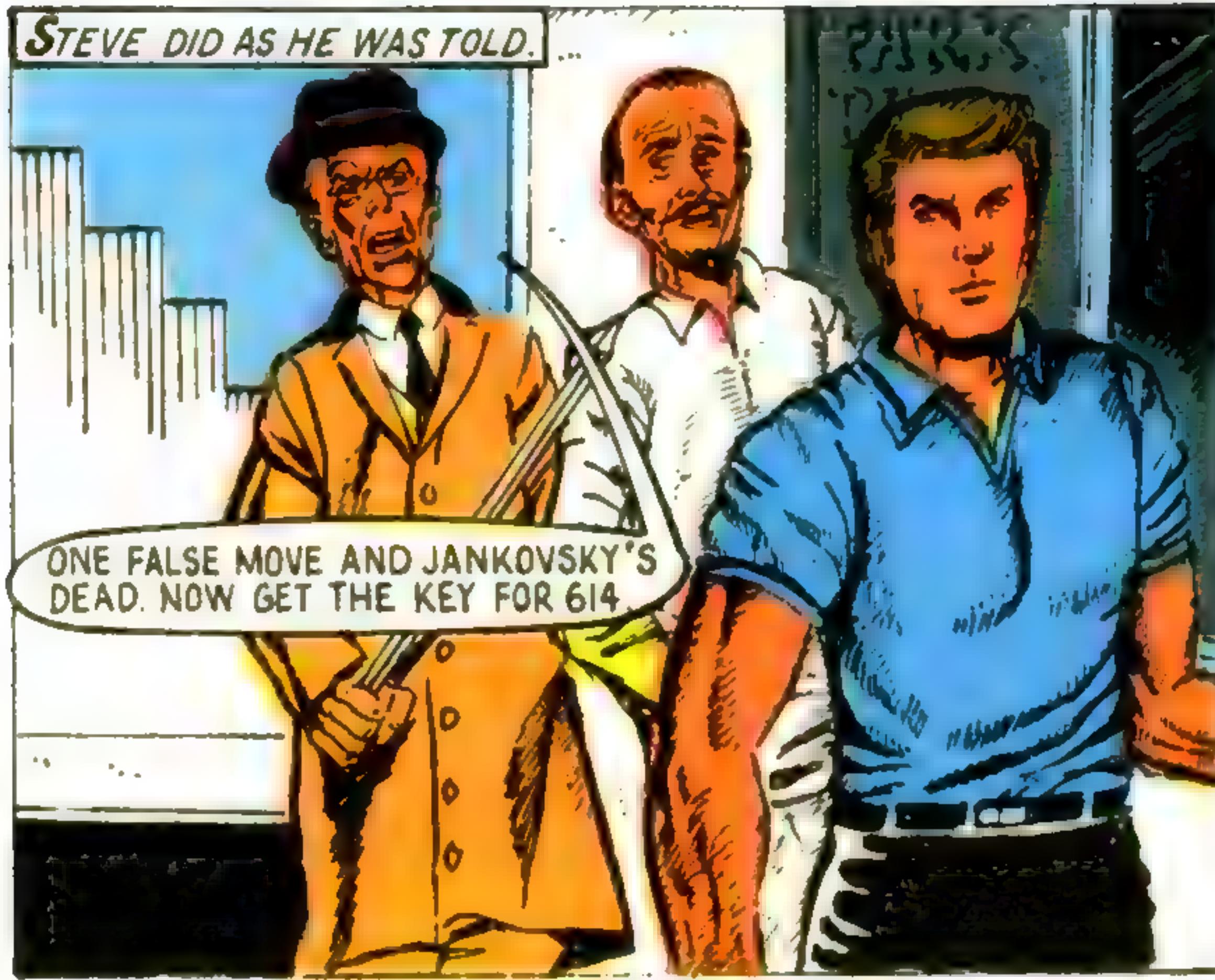
SEAMS SUSPICIOUS











STEVE QUICKLY
RELEASED MRS. JANKOVSKY.

NEITHER WAS THE MAN.

WHAT HAPPENED?

THEY BROKE IN AFTER WE CAME
BACK FROM ALICE KHAN'S. THEY
TOLD MY HUSBAND THAT IF WE DIDN'T
DO WHAT WE WERE TOLD, WE'D BE KILLED.

STEVE AND THE
JANKOVSKY'S RETURNED
TO ALICE KHAN'S.

HE'D BEEN PAID TO COME AGAIN
TODAY AND WHEN HE HEARD THAT
JANKOVSKY WAS IN TOWN HE COULDN'T
TAKE A CHANCE OF HIM TURNING UP.
SO HE FORCED HIM INTO THE CAR AND HELD
MRS. JANKOVSKY AT THE HOTEL.

THE FASHION PIRATE WAS
AN OUT OF WORK ACTOR WITH A
TALENT FOR DISGUISES. HE WAS
IN HERE FOUR WEEKS AGO. THAT'S
WHEN HE PHOTOGRAPHED THE
DRESS YOU SAW, ALICE.

IT'S SUCH A RELIEF
TO KNOW THAT IT WAS NO ONE
I TRUSTED AND TO KNOW
THAT THIS COLLECTION
IS SAFE.

IT WON'T BE FOR MUCH
LONGER IF I DON'T GET THIS
DRESS OFF IN A MINUTE. UNZIP ME
PLEASE, STEVE.

The Planets

Technology is moving so fast nowadays that it's only a matter of time before man somehow communicates or lands on the planets of our solar system. There are nine of them the nearest to the sun is Mercury, then Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto.

We don't know much about some of them, others, we know quite a lot about. Who knows, perhaps one day you or your children or grandchildren may stand on the planets, so lets take a quick tour round.

Mercury is the smallest planet in the solar system and the closest to the sun. It travels through space at 100,000 miles an hour (and you thought your mother drove fast). The surface of Mercury is so hot that lead would melt on it. But at night, the temperature drops to way below our Arctic temperatures. Life as we know it could not exist on Mercury.

Venus is the brightest planet in the system. Some people call it the evening star, others, the morning star. It's not really a star it's a planet. The surface is hidden by a dense layer of cloud so it is difficult to find out much about it. We do know that the surface is probably like the moon's, but hotter –



400°C. It is 67,000,000 miles from the sun and moves round the sun every 224 days.

Earth is our home. More than two thirds of the planet is covered in water, the temperatures vary from 120°F in the desert regions to -60° in the Arctic regions. The Earth is 93,000,000 miles from the sun and moves round it every 365½ days.

Mars is very like the moon. A barren landscape dotted with craters. There is an atmosphere like the Earth's but there is not so much oxygen and the temperatures vary greatly. Space probes have shown that there is no life on Mars which was very disappointing to many people who thought that if life did exist in the solar system, then it would be on Mars. Mars is 142,000,000 miles from the sun.

Jupiter is 483,000,000 miles from the sun and has a diameter of 86,800 miles (more than ten times that of the Earth). It appears in the sky so brightly that early astronomers thought that it must be a sun. Jupiter is surrounded by clouds of ammonia crystals which hide much of the surface of the planet, but some scientists think that a huge layer of ice covers the planet. Jupiter sends out very mysterious radio signals which radio experts think emanate from water movements on the planet.

Saturn is the planet with rings around it. The earth has one moon, Saturn has ten, one of which, Titan, is larger than the planet Mercury. Saturn is so far from the sun that it takes about 30 earth years for it to revolve round the sun. It is surrounded by a layer of poisonous gasses. The rings around Saturn

are made up of small pieces of rock hurling round and round. Saturn is 887,000,000 miles from the sun.

Uranus is surrounded by satellites known as Miranda, Ariel, Titania Oberoh and Umbriel (If some of these names seem familiar look at Shakespear's characters.) It is 1,783,000,000 miles from the sun. It was first spotted by an Englishman called William Herschall. It is the third largest of all the planets and it takes 84 years to revolve round the sun. It is unbelievably cold and surrounded by a dense layer of poisonous gasses.

Neptune was what the Ancients called the king of the Seas. It was only discovered 133 years ago and is 2,794,000,000 miles from the sun. It is so far from the sun that daylight there must be like our dusk and night must be unbelievably black. If you think that winter here is cold, try and imagine a temperature of -200°C. The layer of poisonous gasses around the planet is 2,000 miles thick.

Pluto is so far away that we know almost nothing about it. 3,670,000,000 miles from the sun and moves around it every 248 years. It was only discovered because of its gravitational pull on Neptune and Uranus.

That's a very brief galactical tour. If you want to find out more about the planets why not get some information from your local library – it's an absorbing subject: and the nice thing is that there may even be other planets undiscovered, even today. Perhaps you may be the first to see them. Imagine a planet named after you. Smith.



The Vanishing Tribe

STEVE AUSTIN stretched luxuriously in the warm Mexican sunshine. He tried to decide whether to have one more drink before lunch or to return to his room and take a shower. He decided on the drink and snapped his fingers in order to attract the waiter's attention. As he did so he looked around him. The poolside was full of beautiful girls dressed in the scantiest of swimsuits. At the far end of the pool a buffet lunch was being set up on long tables. All sorts of exotic cold foods were being brought out. "Good food, beautiful women, warm sunshine. What more could anyone want?" he said to himself.

"Paging Colonel Austin. Telephone call for Colonel Steve Austin." A uniformed pageboy was pushing a telephone trolley around the poolside. Steve raised his hand. The boy came up to his table and plugged the 'phone wire into a socket. "Mr Goldman from New York for you Colonel Austin."

Steve picked up the receiver. "Oscar. It's Steve."

"Steve. Hello." Oscar's voice cracked down the line. "How's the vacation?"

"Fine," said Steve knowing very well that Oscar would not call Mexico simply to find out how the vacation was going.

"How would you like a trip into the jungle?" asked Oscar.

"Is that a question or is it an order?"

Oscar laughed. "It's a question, but I must order you to answer 'yes'."

Steve frowned. "What's the matter, Oscar?"

Oscar's voice became serious. "There's something strange happening to one of the jungle tribes. They don't have much immunity to the diseases that we take in our stride - mumps, measles and so on. But suddenly they've started developing them all. For no apparent reason. We want you to get up there and investigate. O.K."

"Sure thing, Oscar," said Steve. "How do I get up there?"

"You're flying up to a small landing strip about ten miles from the settlement. You'll



be met there by someone who will take you by river the rest of the way. See you when you get back." The line went dead. Oscar had hung up.

Steve stood up and went into the hotel. In his room he showered and dressed in a light shirt and trousers. He packed a small bag. He had just finished when the 'phone in his room rang. "Senor Austin. There's a Captain Mendez waiting in reception for you."

"Tell him I'll be right down," said Steve.

Captain Mendez was still waiting when Steve got out of the elevator. He was short and swarthy with a huge black moustache which curved down to his chin. Steve walked towards him. "Captain Mendez? I'm Steve Austin."

The two men shook hands and Mendez led the way to the hotel forecourt and pointed to a low, red sports car. "We drive to the airport in my car," he said. Steve threw his case into

the back and jumped into the passenger's seat.

Mendez drove like many Latins -- with complete disregard for pedestrians or other traffic on the road. Several times Steve covered his eyes with his hand as Mendez swerved to avoid oncoming traffic. Traffic lights meant nothing to the Mexican. Red or green, he went straight through. On one occasion he narrowly missed two nuns who were crossing the road. One of the nuns crossed herself as Steve and Mendez flashed by.

Mendez smiled at Steve. His teeth flashed sparkingly white against the thick black moustache. "Don't look so worried, Senor," he shouted above the roar of the engine. "In Mexico driving is a sport." As he spoke an oncoming lorry swept by, horn blaring. Mendez turned and shouted at the driver. Steve could not make out what Mendez was saying, but he had no doubt that it was rude.

By the time they reached the airport, Steve was thinking that space travel was a heck of a lot safer than driving with Mendez. Mendez jammed on the brakes and the car screeched to a halt. He jumped out and threw the car keys at a commissionaire. "Park it in my usual place," he said.

Steve followed Mendez through the crowded and steamy airport building and out on to the tarmac. A small, two seater executive jet was being checked by several men in white overalls. Mendez said something to them in Spanish. One of the men nodded. Mendez turned to Steve. "The plane is ready. We go now."

A few seconds later, Mendez had manoeuvred the plane on to the runway and had accelerated the engine to screaming pitch. Within a minute they were up in the air, looking down at the tourist resort, fast disappearing beneath them. Even at that height, the buildings were sparkling white, the sea an unbelievable green and the ribbon of sand a dazzling yellow.

They left the town behind them and were soon flying over a carpet of dense greenery.

Pushing its way through the lush jungle, a silver river bulged and bent its way along its tortuous course. They maintained their height for about an hour and then started to descend. Steve could see no landing area, and was sure that Mendez had made some kind of mistake. Suddenly a narrow clearing appeared before them. With enviable skill, Mendez brought the plane safely down to earth. Steve jumped down and before he had time to turn and thank Mendez, the Mexican had revved the engine and was racing down the rough runway. He narrowly missed the treetops at the end, zoomed round in a circle and raced off into the sky.

The heat was indescribable. Steve took no more than ten steps and had to stop. The sweat was pouring down his brow.

"It's not so bad on the river." The voice behind him was soft and feminine. Steve turned round. The voice fitted its owner exactly. She was very tall with long, soft fair hair cascading down her shoulders. The skin was beautifully tanned. The eyes were a dazzling green.

"You must be Steve Austin." The girl approached hand out-stretched. "I'm Sarah Crawford." Steve shook her hand. Despite the humidity of the jungle, it was cool and soft.

She explained to Steve that she worked at the jungle settlement as a medical missionary. There was only one other white person there – her assistant, Alain de Tournanville.

"De Tournanville," said Steve. "That sounds familiar."

"Alain's father, Michel de Tournanville was a famous botanist. He died in the jungle about five years ago and Alain came out to carry on his work. He helps me in the 'surgery' when he's not out collecting specimens."

Sarah walked towards the edge of the clearing. "The river's not far from here. I've a boat waiting. It's cooler on the river."

Steve followed her through the jungle. The greenness was overpowering. Every step was an effort. Sweat gushed from every pore. Sarah turned round. "It's not far", she said. "You get used to the heat eventually."

They soon came to the river. It was wide





and fast flowing. It may have looked silver from the air, but in reality it was a dark muddy brown. There was a boat tethered to a broken tree. Sarah jumped in and picked up the oars. "I'll row if you don't find it too emasculating. I know the currents like the back of my hand."

On the way up river she explained to Steve that over the past few weeks there had been a dramatic increase in the number of common colds that the natives had been catching.

"They've little immunity to what we think of as ordinary illnesses. Then there was an

outbreak of measles three weeks ago and now it's mumps and scarlet fever. Nobody's died yet, but the natives have begun to think that there's a curse on the village and want to leave." She paused as she skilfully steered the small boat over some fast rapids.

"There's no explanation?" asked Steve.

"None at all," said Sarah. "We've only had three white people visit us in the past six months, and they've all been contacted and have been cleared. It's baffling."

"So you decided to ask for help."

"Yes. I radio'd W.H.O. in New York to report

the illnesses and I was put in touch with someone who put me through to Mr Goldstein?"

"Goldsmith," corrected Steve. "They must be taking it very seriously to call in Oscar."

"It is serious," said Sarah. "If these diseases spread to other tribes with no resistance, we don't have the medical facilities to cope and a whole civilization could be wiped out."

They were approaching a small jetty. "We're here," said Sarah.

There was a group of children splashing around in the water. Steve glanced across to the far bank and was horrified to see a dark shape glide slowly and threateningly into the water. Using his Bionic vision Steve followed its path under the muddy surface. It was heading straight for one of the children who was swimming out to the boat. Without hesitation Steve dived in. The boat rocked dangerously. Sarah almost slid into the river but righted herself just in time. Steve was swimming towards the centre of the river. Suddenly there was an awesome roar and a huge crocodile surfaced a few yards from him. Its jaws opened ominously.

With a tremendous surge of power, Steve threw himself out of the water and landed on the reptile's back. The crocodile slashed the water with its dreadful tail. Steve gripped the beast's upper jaw and heaved with all his might. The crocodile was taken by surprise,

but managed to submerge. The children watched horrified from the bank.

Sarah screamed so loudly that a coven of birds squawked out of the dense green forest. The crocodile splashed to the surface again. Steve was still on its back heaving at the upper jaw with all his strength. With a sickening wrenching sound and an explosion of blood the jaw came away in Steve's hand. The crocodile thrashed its tail in a dying gesture of defiance and was then still.

Steve swam towards the shore.

Sarah rushed up to him. "You're alright. Thank God."

Steve nodded.

"The children have been warned not to swim in the river, but... children are children."

Steve and Sarah walked towards the village. The children danced around them. They obviously looked at Steve as some kind of God.

The village was little more than a collection of mud huts. Natives sat outside many of them obviously ill, languishing in the sun. A tall, white-coated figure was leaning over an old woman. "That's Alain," said Sarah pointing towards him. Steve and Sarah walked up to him and Sarah introduced them to each other.

"I think Steve is a little tired after the exertion of the day. Could you show him to your hut, Alain, and let him rest?"





Alain led the way to a hut which was set some distance from the others. Inside, it was cool and refreshing. There was a crude bed and an old-fashioned chest. A light sheet was on the bed and a mosquito net above it. "You will stay here for the rest of your stay, Monsieur Steve. I have moved my things to a vacant hut in the village. I will waken you before dinner. If you wish to shower there is a device round the back." He nodded politely and left.

Steve was tired. He lay down on the bed and was soon sound asleep. He was wakened several hours later by Alain.

"Dinner will be ready in one hour," he said and left.

Steve got up and walked round to the back of the hut. There was a tree on to which someone had tied a bucket with a rope attached to it. Steve stripped off and stood under the tree. He pulled at the rope and a torrent of water splashed over him. He felt refreshed.

An hour later he was sitting with Sarah and Alain in Sarah's hut. The meal was simple but delicious. Grilled fish and vegetables and beautiful fresh fruit. They chatted throughout the meal and well into the night. Steve looked at his watch after about three hours and excused himself. He was quite washed out.

Back in his hut, Steve found he could not

sleep. He looked in the chest by the bed and found an old book. He thought that reading might help him to drop off. The book was an old journal. It was written in French. The front page had an inscription on it.

"Le Journal de Michel de Tournanville.
Mai 1956 – Septembre 1957."

Steve did not speak French very well, but he could understand enough of written French to be absolutely fascinated by what he read. The journal ended abruptly with the entry for the sixteenth of September, 1957. "Demain, je dois dire les authorities . . ."

Steve flicked back to the front of the book. The handwriting of the inscription was different from the writing in the rest of the book. He looked in the chest again and found the draft of a letter which was signed "Alain". So Alain had catalogued his father's diaries and journals.

Steve blew out the lamp and was soon sound asleep. The next day he was up bright and early. He dressed in a light cotton short-sleeved shirt and slacks. He sauntered casually down to the settlement taking careful notice of the trees and plants as he went. Sarah was already hard at work tending to some sick natives. "Good morning," she smiled brightly as she spoke. "I think there's still some hot coffee in my hut. Alain's there."

Steve went into Sarah's hut. Alain was sitting at a table, his hands cupped round a cup of coffee. "Bonjour, Steve," he said as Steve entered. "You sleep well?"

"Very well, thank you," said Steve. "Is there any coffee left?"

"Mais oui." Alain stood up and poured a cup of coffee for Steve.

Steve smiled his thanks. "Is it all right for me to wander around the jungle this morning. I won't be attacked by vicious animals, will I?"

Alain laughed. "Non. It is quite safe."

Steve drank his coffee slowly. When he was finished he went out into the bright, hot sunshine. He looked around and saw a track leading off into the jungle. He decided to follow it. He hadn't gone too far when he found what he was looking for. He knelt down

and examined it carefully. He walked on and found more and more. Thick bunches growing profusely all over the place. "Well," he said to himself, "that's the motive, but which one of them, and how?"

He stopped in his tracks. Soft footsteps, were following him. Steve turned slowly. His bionic eye caught a sudden glimpse of a bamboo pipe aiming in his direction. He dived to the ground just as the dart whizzed past him and embedded itself in a tree just behind him. He stood up and raced into the thick undergrowth. There was no one to be seen. "I know it's one of them, and one of them knows that I know. But which one?"

He made his way back to the settlement. Sarah and Alain were together, bending over the body of an old woman. Sarah stood up. There were tears in her eyes. "She's the first one to die. Scarlet Fever. Oh, Steve, how could she get Scarlet Fever?"

Alain sighed. "Now the natives will be

determined to leave here. They are sure the place is cursed."

"Where will they go?" asked Steve.

"They will move on further into the jungle. Away, as far as possible from civilization. They will probably return to their old ways, despite Sarah's good work."

Sarah buried her head on Alain's shoulder and started to sob deeply. Alain comforted her as best he could. Steve felt slightly embarrassed by his presence and turned away. Groups of silent tribesmen were standing silently, watching. The rest of the day slipped away. The silent grief of the natives could be felt all round the settlement.

Quite late in the afternoon when Steve knew that both Sarah and Alain were busy, he slipped into the little hut that served as a dispensary. There were rows of bottles, all neatly labelled. Steve looked round the room. High on the wall there was a roughly hewn cupboard. Steve advanced towards it and tried



to open it. It was locked. He felt in his pocket and found a small strip of plastic – very narrow and pliable. He slipped it between the two doors at the lock. With a slight click the door swung open. There were six bottles in front of him and a tray of hypodermic syringes. Steve picked up one of the bottles and examined it. He could not be quite certain, but if his suspicions were correct he knew what had happened. Just then, someone coughed behind him.

Steve swung round. Sarah was standing quite still.

"Steve! What are you doing in here?"

"Who's cupboard is it?" asked Steve.

"Why, It's Alain's. He keeps it locked because they are cultures he has collected in the jungle. I told you he was continuing his father's work as well as helping me."

"Why's it locked?" asked Steve, not satisfied with Sarah's explanation.

"He's always kept it locked. I never thought to ask exactly why."

"Sarah, has Alain been away recently?"

"He went to Acapulco about three or four months ago. Why?"

"Was he all right when he came back?"

"He had a slight sniff; that's all." Sarah looked puzzled.

"Couldn't that have started the epidemic?"

"No. Of course not. Alain was very insistent. All the natives he came in contact with were vaccinated by me. He insisted that he stay out of the way."

Steve was silent for a minute. "Where is Alain?" he asked eventually.

"He's up the river bank somewhere, collecting botanical specimens."

Steve raced out of the hut and ran down to the river. His vision homed in on Alain about four hundred yards up river. He was holding a bamboo pipe. Very quietly Steve crept through the undergrowth. He was about thirty yards from Alain when a twig snapped under his foot. The crack reverberated round the silence.

Alain looked up and saw Steve advance towards him. With no hesitation he slipped something into his mouth and raised the pipe to his lips. The dart missed Steve by a fraction of an inch. Steve jumped about twelve feet into the air. He grabbed a long bit of creeper and swung through the air like Tarzan. A second bit of creeper took him right up to



Alain. With a loud crunch his feet kicked the Frenchman in the face with such force that he fell on his back. Steve was on top of him in an instant.

The Frenchman was stronger than he looked. His hand pushed upwards on Steve's chin and Steve felt two fingers ram their way into his nostrils. The pain was excruciating. Alain's other arm was round Steve's chest pulling him down. The strain on Steve's neck was immense. With a loud grunt, he brought his hand down on to the Frenchman's throat in a well-aimed Karate chop. He heard the Frenchman gasp and release his grip. The American pulled his nose free of Alain's fingers and picked him up by the collar of his thin shirt. A punch from his bionic arm crunched into the Frenchman's stomach. As his head came towards the ground, Steve brought his knee up and cracked it into Alain's face. Alain fell backwards and rolled into the muddy waters.

Steve was about to dive in after him when he stopped dead in his tracks. There was nothing he could do. The menacing brown shape of a crocodile moved swiftly towards Alain. He had managed to stand up. The waters were swirling round his waist. The crocodile moved in for the kill. A heart-rending scream froze on the Frenchman's lips. He lifted his arm out of the water. What had once been his hand was now a pulpy mess of blood and ripped flesh. The crocodile moved in again tearing a huge hunk of skin and bone from Alain's side. It was all over in less than a minute. The bloodied remains of the Frenchman floated on the surface of the river. A black cloud of vultures circled overhead.

Steve turned round. Sarah was standing by his side. As long as he would live, he would remember the look of frozen horror on the medical missionary's face.

"Don't look," he said.

Sarah turned away, her stomach retching as she did so.

Steve gently took her by the arm and led her back to the village. "Why? Oh why? Steve, why?" was all that she could say.



Steve tried to explain.

"There's a notebook in Alain's hut. It's his father's."

Sarah nodded. "Yes, I know. It was the notes of his last journey. Alain looked at it often."

"Did you ever look at it?"

Sarah shook her head. "I can't read French."

Steve said that he knew enough to have gleaned the meaning of the old botanist's notes. "This area is one of the few places in the world where *violetia constantinus* grows naturally. Several years ago, after Alain's father died, it was discovered that if the leaves are crushed and filtered, the resultant fluid is an invaluable drug. It can cure many diseases very quickly. It was thought that it only grew in the mountains of Peru. Alain



read his father's notes and discovered that his father mentioned it. The old man did not realize its significance. But Alain did."

"But what's this got to do with the native's sickness?"

"Alain realized that if the natives could be convinced that the land was cursed, they would move on. You would probably have gone with them. He would have been left here to corner the market in *violetia constantinus*. He would have cleared the jungle around here and cultivated it and made a fortune. If it grows naturally here, it can be cultivated here."

"I still don't see" said Sarah.

"When he came back with his sneezes he insisted that all the natives be inoculated. He injected one or two of them with virulent cold serum, and then when they caught severe colds, he injected their families with preventive doses. Only one or two he injected with mump serum, or scarlet fever or whatever.

The natives were bound to think that there was a curse on them with all these new illnesses. They would have moved on very quickly, I think."

"Some are packing already," said Sarah.

"Stop them," said Steve. "Explain that Alain has sacrificed himself to the river gods and that the curse has been removed."

* * *

Two days later Steve was back at his hotel. He had filed his report with Oscar and was enjoying the end of his holiday. He looked across the table at the smiling blond sitting opposite.

"Feeling better?" he asked.

Sarah nodded. "I don't think I'll ever understand man's greed."

"As long as there are good people like you in the world," said Steve "they won't get away with it for long."



Pioneers of Flight

The aircraft in which Steve Austin crashed and almost lost his life would undoubtedly have scared the first men who dreamed of flying.

Ever since man saw birds and insects flying through the air, he longed to copy them. An old Greek legend tells of a father and son escaping from an island in the Aegean Sea by making wings out of birds' feathers and attaching them to their arms. The father told the son not to fly too high, or the warmth of the sun would melt the wax and cause the feathers to fall out. But Icarus ignored his father's advice, soared up in the sky and was horrified when he saw

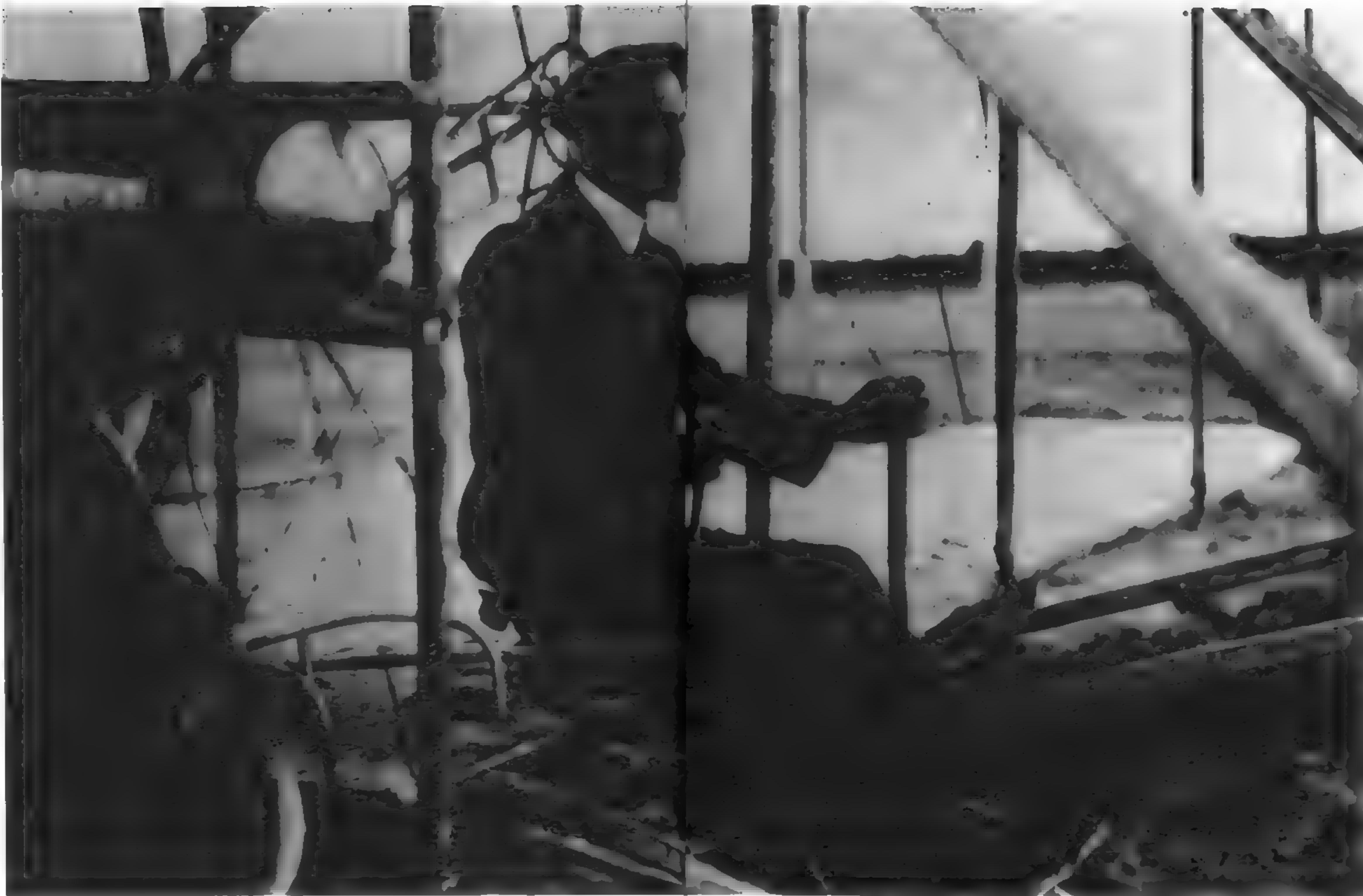
his father's words come true. He crashed into the sea, his wings disintegrating around him.

Because birds could fly, the earliest attempts at flight were carried out with man-made wings covered in bird's feathers. One man, John Darien, even jumped off the top of a castle in Scotland with such wings. But despite his furious and frantic flapping he crashed to the ground. Miraculously, he was not hurt and decided that the failure had been caused by the fact that he had used chicken feathers – and chickens could not fly. "Next time," he said, "I will use the feathers of an eagle". History does not tell us if he was successful, but had he been, no doubt someone would have recorded it!



Leonardo da Vinci designed a primitive helicopter and spent years trying to discover the secrets of flying – but he failed.

In fact, man had had aircraft for thousands of years – but no one realised it. The Chinese invented the kite and the kite is, basically, an aircraft. It was not until an Englishman, Sir George Calley, began to



experiment with kites that the story of aircraft really began. He constructed a very primitive glider that actually worked. Being a gentleman, of course, he did not try it himself, but sent his coachman up in it. The glider hovered in the air for a few minutes before landing. The coachman instantly resigned. "Sir George," he said, "I am a coachman, not a flyer."

Further experiments with gliders were carried out throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, but it was not until the early years of this century that man's dream of powered flight came to be realised.

In 1905, two brothers, Orville and Wilbur Wright, designed and built an aircraft that flew in the air, powered mechanically.

From this small beginning, the aircraft industry exploded and became the international giant it is today. In 1906, Louis Blériot made the first crossing from France to England in an aircraft. Later, Alcock and Brown successfully crossed the Atlantic

Ocean from America to Ireland. 1924 saw Charles Lindberg make the first single-handed Atlantic crossing in an Aircraft called The Spirit of Saint Louis. His plane was called this because the citizens of St Louis had backed him with money to realise his dream.

One of the earliest aviators was called Francis Chichester. He was the first to fly from Australia to New Zealand. More than forty years later he became the first man to sail single handed around the world. His aircraft and his yacht were both called Gypsy Moth.

The women of the world were just as fascinated by flying as men – Amelia Ehrhart, Amy Johnson and others proved that women were just as capable as men.

The 1920s and '30s saw aircraft becoming more and more popular as a means of transport. One Russian airliner even had a promenade deck for passengers to take a walk while the aircraft was flying.

Today, Concorde can cross the Atlantic in under four hours: Scores of Russians, beginning with Yuri Gagarin in 1961 have orbited in space. Americans have walked on the surface of the moon. Russian and American rockets have probed the outer reaches of our solar system. Mars has been photographed from the air. Spaceships have joined up in the middle of outer space. None of these things would have been possible if the early pioneers had paid any attention to the laughter that their first experiments caused.

Who knows? Perhaps even today, someone is working on the next barrier for man to break. We've conquered flight – what next?



In Vision

WITH HIS bionic vision, Colonel Steve Austin has fantastic vision – but other people are not nearly so lucky. Their sight is so poor that they find it difficult to go out on their own. In the early part of this century, someone had the bright idea of training dogs to lead these visually handicapped people when they go out in the street.

Today it is a very common sight to see dogs leading their owners and people who need these dogs find that they have a freedom that they would not otherwise have.

The first guide dogs were German Shepherd Dogs, but it is more common for Labrador Retrievers and Collies to be trained for this work nowadays.

Training starts at a very early age. When a puppy has been selected for Guide Dog training it is given to a handler to look after and train it. As well as the basic commands that all dogs must learn – 'sit', 'stay', 'come', 'heel' and so on, the prospective guide dogs have to learn to respond to a wide variety of signals and commands.

They must be trained not to be distracted by traffic and so once the basic commands have been taught and learned, the dogs are taken out in ordinary streets to learn that traffic and pedestrians should not distract them from their work. They have to learn that a moving car is a danger and that it is only safe to cross the road when there is no traffic in sight, or it has stopped to let the dog and trainer cross. The Guide Dogs must learn not to be distracted by other dogs they

may come across. For this reason, it is most usual for spayed bitches to be used. Male dogs may easily be led astray by the scent of a bitch on heat. If male dogs are used, they are normally neutered.

The dogs must learn to judge heights and widths, so that they will not lead their owners into tight squeezes.

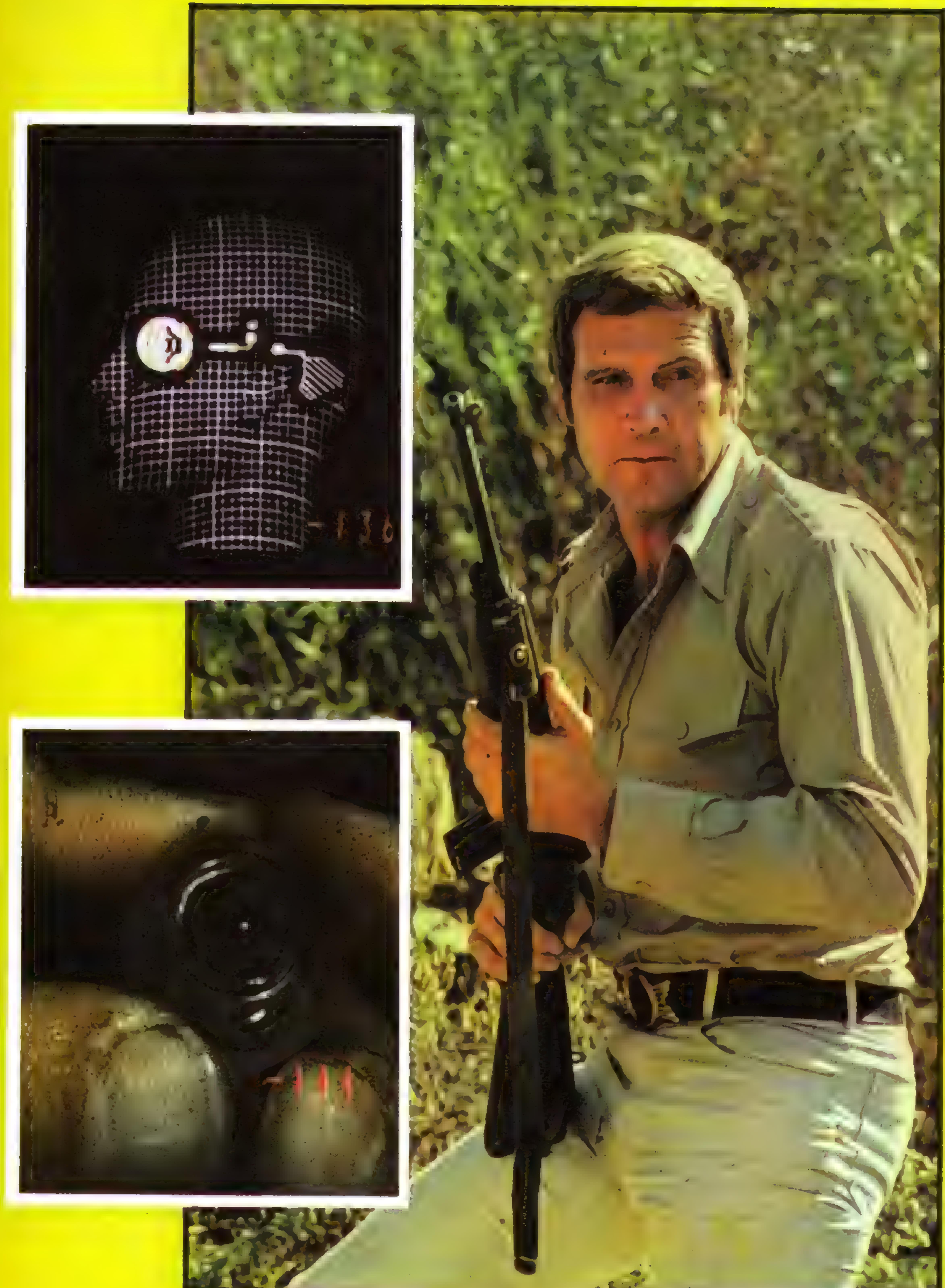
They must learn to board buses and trains safely so that the visually handicapped can travel around like people with better sight.

They must learn to board buses and trains safely so that the visually handicapped can travel around like people with better sight.

Training takes some time but it is necessary. All the time it is being trained, the dog is handled by one person only. Shortly before training has been completed, the dog will be introduced to its new owner. The visually handicapped person who is lucky enough to have the dog will also have to get used to being led by his dog. He must learn to have absolute trust in the animal and to respond to all the signals. When the dog stops, the owner must also stop and wait until the dog moves off again.

The bond that grows between owner and dog is one of the strongest of all friendships between man and animal. After initial supervision the owner and the dog will be allowed out in the street for the first time by themselves and as they get used to each other, these trips will become longer and longer until absolute trust has been established.

The dogs wear special harnesses, which are much less flexible than ordinary leads. This allows the owner to know when his dog has stopped. Once the great day comes when the dog is given to the owner to take home for good, the visually handicapped person who is lucky enough to have the dog, will find that he has a new dimension to his life. So in a strange sort of way, the dog is the bionic eye of the visually handicapped.



Interview with Lee Majors

Where were you born Lee, and what was your early family life?

I was born in Wyandotte. I shouldn't think that any of your readers have ever heard of it. It's a small town in Michigan, in North America. My parents died when I was very young.

That must have been very hard for you?

I took it very badly at the time, but it did make me determined to make a success of my life. I was adopted by relatives in Kentucky and grew up down there. Kentucky's where they make bourbon, you know.

Did you go to school in Kentucky?

Yea. But I spent most of my time playing football – not English soccer-type football, but American football.

What's the difference?

There's very little in common between the two games apart from the fact that both games have two teams. American football's like a cross between, eh, soccer, rugby and suicide.

Suicide?

Well it's a very rough, tough game. Everyone wears lots of padding to protect themselves from injury. If they didn't there would hardly be any players left on the field at the end of the game.

You must have been good at it if you spent all your time playing it.

Well I made the top team in school and got a scholarship to go to Indiana University. I played for them and for Eastern Kentucky State College. At one time I thought of becoming a full-time coach. But I got a degree in Education so I decided to become a teacher and coach as well.

How did you become an actor then?

Well, I injured my back, and anyway, James Dean had always been a hero of mine so I decided to give it a try. So I headed for California and took acting lessons at MGM.

What was your first break?

I was chosen to play Barbara Stanwick's kid in a TV series called the *Big Valley*. I don't suppose your readers will have heard of her, but their parents will know her well. She's a great actress and was a film star of the 1940s and 1950s. I then made a film with Stewart Granger called *The Men from Shiloh*. Interestingly enough James Drury and Doug McClure were also in the movie and they went on to play in the *Shiloh* TV series. James had the title role, the Virginian, Doug was Trampas – remember?

Yes, I remember the Virginian. What happened to you after the film was made?

I made a couple more movies and then was picked to be the *Six Million Dollar Man*.

And you haven't looked back?

No. I never look back. Only forward.

Looking forward to what?

Oh. Catching bigger fish. Hunting. Improving my golf. Being happy with Farrah.

Farrah?

My wife, Farrah Fawcett-Majors. You probably saw her in *Charlie's Angels*.

That's some combination? The Six Million Dollar Man and one of Charlie's Angels. Lee Majors, thanks very much.

My pleasure.



A Monstrous Tale

The attractive brunette, her hair tucked neatly into her airline stewardess's cap, gently shook the sleeping figure of Colonel Steve Austin. "We'll be landing in a few minutes, Colonel Austin," she said. "Would you fasten your seat belt, please?" She smiled as she spoke and Steve smiled back at her as he fumbled, drowsily, with his belt.

He looked out of the window and saw the neatly laid out streets forming strange patterns, thousands of feet below the aircraft. The plane lost height gradually and Steve could make out the forbidding outline of Edinburgh Castle and the grid-iron street plan of Edinburgh's New Town – one of the most splendid examples of Georgian architecture in the world.

A few hours, or so it seemed, before, Steve had been sitting in Oscar's office in Washington. Oscar had grinned as he handed Steve a report marked TOP SECRET. "Read

that and let me know what you think," Oscar had said.

Steve flicked through the report, not really believing what he saw. "Aw, come on, Oscar – it's not April Fools Day. You don't really expect me to believe this, do you?"

Oscar nodded. "Apparently it's being taken very seriously in high circles for reasons I'll explain." Oscar pulled open one of the drawers under his desk and took out another file. He laid it on his desk. Steve stretched across to pick it up. Oscar's hand remained firmly on the file. "I'm sorry, Steve, but even you can't read all the material in this file."

Steve frowned and asked why.

"I can't tell you that either, I'm afraid."



Oscar had suddenly gone very serious. "The records in this file go back over six hundred years. It contains all the sightings that have been reported of the Loch Ness Monster as well as other things. I read this last night and some of the things in it are so scary that it's been decided to give it the highest secret classification. Not the stuff about the Loch Ness Monster, of course, I'll give you copies of all that, but some inexplicable things have happened around the world in the past fifty years and this file contains detailed records of them all."

Oscar paused and Steve jumped in before he continued. "But, Oscar," he said. "You don't expect me to believe that after six hundred years we've now got definite proof that the Monster exists."

"No. but if you're to be briefed thoroughly you'll have to read up on the subject. It seems that recently the number of sightings has increased tenfold. It's become so common that the British newspapers have stopped reporting them. Until last week that is." Oscar slid a photograph across the desk. Steve picked it up and looked at it closely. It had been taken on a clear sunny day. The dark waters of the loch were streaked with sunny ripples and there, right in the centre, was the definite outline of a monster. A narrow head sat on top of a long neck, and behind it were six humps. Even at a distance of some several hundred feet it was an awe-inspiring sight.

"It's a hoax, Oscar."

"Maybe, that's what you have to find out. Our divers have failed to come up with any evidence. Sonic soundings report nothing. We're hoping that bionics may."

"But why the importance?"

Oscar frowned. Six months ago it was discovered that there were huge reserves of uranium and plutonium ore around the loch and probably on the bottom as well. It could make Scotland the most valuable uranium source in the world. But since the discovery was made, the monster began to be sighted almost daily and then, two weeks ago, the



bodies of four divers were found on the shore. They were horribly mutilated – as if they'd been half devoured by a monster. The next day the body of the Chief of Research was found in the same spot in the same condition. Their deaths have been hushed up. The British Government don't want to cause a panic."

Steve leant back in his chair. "But why use American agents?"

"Because," said Oscar, "the Chief and the divers were all Americans – on 'loan' to the British Government; and the President doesn't like five of our top marine experts being apparently killed by some previously fictitious monster."

And so Steve was now sitting in an aeroplane approaching Edinburgh airport. The plane landed and came to a halt. Steve waited until the engines had been switched off and stood up. The stewardess was standing at the door of the aircraft. "Good-bye, Colonel Austin," she said. "I hope that



you have enjoyed your flight."

"Yes, thanks."

An hour later Steve was driving his hired car through some of the most beautiful scenery he had ever seen in his life. Purple mountains and green, green, glens flashed by as he drove up the twisty road towards Inverness. Oscar had told him to contact Lady Fiona Blackadder of Blackadder House. Steve was to stay at the house while he was searching around.

He arrived at the grim, forbidding mansion house. A uniformed butler had opened the door before Steve had even switched the engine off. "Good evening, Colonel Austin," the butler said as Steve got out of the car. "Lady Fiona is expecting you. I'll send someone out for your baggage later."

"How strange," thought Steve without saying anything. "The man has a strong Scottish accent but he uses the American word baggage, not luggage."

The butler escorted him into the house. Its exterior may have presented an unfriendly face to the world, but inside the house was warm and welcoming. The butler showed him into a large, oak panelled drawing room. A huge log fire roared in a stone fireplace. Around the walls were portraits of generations of kilted, bewhiskered figures

many of them carrying shotguns. Several pairs of mounted antlers had been hung on the wall. On a small table in the corner three crystal decanters in a silver and oak tantalus glistened in the dancing firelight.

"Have a drink, Sir," said the butler. "Lady Fiona will be down in a minute."

Steve poured himself a large whisky and asked the butler for some ginger ale. The butler coughed, disapprovingly. "I'm afraid, Sir, that in these parts we do not hold with such heathen practices as putting ginger ale in whisky. It's a Sassenach thing, quite typical of the race. You can have water or nothing at all."

Steve smiled to himself. "I think I lost that round," he said, as he sipped his neat whisky.

"And which round would that be?" asked Lady Fiona from the doorway.

Steve looked up and could hardly believe his eyes. Lady Fiona was the air stewardess who had wakened him on the plane. She laughed. "Yes, you're right. Hello again, Colonel Austin. I hope that you had a good drive up. I'm afraid that I couldn't offer you a seat in my Rolls but that may have broken my cover."

"Cover?"

"Yes. In these parts I'm Lady Fiona Blackadder who travels abroad a lot. Albion

Airways think that I'm Fiona Black who always takes some leave when we land in Scotland."

"And which are you really?"

"I'm Fiona Blackadder and I work for your Government. As an air hostess I can travel abroad and pass messages on to agents overseas without arousing any suspicion. I think . . ."

She was cut short by the sound of breaking glass and the report of a double-barrelled shotgun blasting pellets across the aristocratic drawing room. The glass on several of the portraits shattered, spraying the room with lethally sharp pieces of flying glass. With one bionic bound, Steve had leapt across the room towards the broken window. Shielding his face with his arms he jumped through the window frame, breaking what was left of the glass into a million tiny bits.

A dark figure was running across the lawn. Steve threw himself at him in a desperate rugby tackle and caught the man by his heels. The man gasped as he hit the ground. Steve leapt to his feet and aimed a sharp kick at the figure. The man sprang up and suddenly drew a small object from his pocket. With a quick flick, six inches of lethal steel flashed from the handle. The blade glittered in the moonlight. Lunging forward, the man threw himself at Steve. Steve side-stepped him and with a quick movement threw himself to the ground. He then leapt upwards and caught hold of the man's wrist as he flashed past.

"AAAGGHH," screamed the would-be assassin as Steve squeezed with all his power. The knife dropped silently to the ground.

Steve whipped the man's arm round and forced it behind his back in an agonising half-Nelson. "Right, Bud," he said between clenched teeth. "Back to the house with you."

Steve began to march him across the lawn. He heard a strange whizzing sound, but even before his instinct told him to duck,





an arrow had thudded into his captive's chest. With a mortal grunt, the man slumped forward. He hit the ground with such an impact that the arrow plunged even deeper into his chest and the point ripped his jacket as it emerged from his back.

Steve ran towards the house. Lady Fiona, for Steve still thought of her as that, was quite calmly straightening some pictures. A maid, rather a pretty one Steve noticed, was sweeping up the debris with an old fashioned brush and shovel.

"Are you all right, Colonel?" Fiona asked as he rushed into the room.

"Yes, but I'm afraid that whoever shot at us has just been killed himself."

"Killed, but how?" Are you sure that it wasn't meant for you?"

"Positive. He was in front of me. Whoever killed him did so deliberately to prevent him talking, I suspect. He was killed by an arrow."

"An arrow!"

The maid looked up. "And what's so

unusual about arrows?" she said. "They're used quite a lot in these parts by poachers after the deer. They have the advantage of not making a noise, like the guns do."

Steve looked at the maid. "You seem to know a lot about it."

"Dinna fash yerself, Sir. It's common knowledge in these parts. Why I could name you at least two dozen around here who could have out-shot Robin Hood himself." She looked across at Fiona. "I'm afraid, my lady, that because of this incident, dinner will be slightly delayed." With a sniff of her pretty nose she left the room.

Fiona laughed. "She's quite a character. Her family have worked in this house for generations, I believe."

Steve did not smile. "There's something very serious going on here. Obviously your cover has been broken, and by someone who will stop at nothing to prevent the uranium being mined."

"I suppose that you're right," said Fiona, frowning as she spoke. "What shall we do about it?"

"Nothing! I suggest we have dinner and then a good night's sleep. It's too dark outside to do anything tonight."

They had another drink and it was not too long until the butler announced that dinner was ready to be served, at last. The food was good and well served by the maid. Steve remarked on how fresh the fish was. "I suppose it comes from the loch," he said.

"The loch? Dinnie be daft, Sir. The monster gets all the fish in the loch."

"The monster. You've seen it then?"

"Of course," she said, putting the plate of fish down and drawing up a chair. "With my own two eyes not a week since." She sat down at the table much to Steve and Fiona's hidden amusement. "Well," she continued. "I was on my way to my sister's house on the far shore. Last Tuesday, was it? No. I tell a lie. It was Wednesday. Anyway, I was cycling round the loch and there it was—large as life."

"What was it like?" asked Steve.

"Fiercesome it was. A huge ugly head and a scaley skin – like that fish you're eating and black, it was. Black as the Earl of Hell's waistcoat."

"Could you take me to see it, at least the place where you saw it?" asked Steve.

"I could indeed, sniffed the maid.

"Tomorrow morning?" asked Steve.

"As you like." Mary, for that was her name, stood up from the table and carried on serving the meal, as if the interruption had never happened.

The next morning was warm and the sun was shining. The waters of the loch, normally grey and frightening, seemed inviting. Even the awe-inspiring mountains seemed to have lost some of their grandeur. Mary and Steve walked along the road towards the spot where Mary had seen the monster. They approached a little cove with

a narrow fringe of shingle. "It was just there," said Mary pointing out to the sea-like waters. "About twenty or thirty feet or so away."

"Is the water deep here?" asked Steve.

"Deep! Man did you not know that the loch at this point is said to be bottomless?"

"But that cove?"

"A ledge. I don't know how the shingle got there, but it's sheer right down from the edge."

"Interesting," thought Steve to himself.

"Will there by anything else, Sir?" asked Mary.

"No. I don't think so. You go back to the house and I'll follow you in a minute or two."



"Don't be late for your lunch. At one o'clock sharp, mind."

Steve promised that he would be there on time and Mary turned and headed back to the house.

Steve waited until she had disappeared from sight and then jumped down on to the



ledge. At that moment the sun caught a small silver object lying on the shingle. For less than the twinkling of an eye it glistened in the bright sunlight but that was enough for Steve's bionic vision to pick it up. He bent down. It was a small silver chain. He tried to pick it up, but the end was caught on something. Steve dusted away the shingle around it. He was amazed to find that the end of the chain seemed to be stuck in a sort of trap door. He kicked away the remaining shingle and there was, indeed a trap door cut into the rock below.

Looking round to see if anyone was watching and satisfying himself that there was no one, he very gently lifted it. It creaked slightly as he did so. The door swung open to reveal a flight of stairs, roughly hewn out of the rock. "People must use this as an exit rather than an entrance," he said to himself.

"Otherwise how could they cover it over again?"

He climbed back to the roadside and pulled some ferns and branches from the trees. He then returned back to the trapdoor and tiptoed down the stairs. Just before he disappeared from sight completely, he arranged the branches and ferns across the gaping hole and hoped that from the surface it looked like a pile of old wood.

Although the stairway was not lit, Steve's vision allowed him to see a little. Anyone else would have been paralysed by the blackness. He made his way down the stairs and along a winding passageway. The walls were covered in slime and the whole place smelt musty.

The passageway twisted and wound its way along. Steve knelt down and took off his shoes. He continued to walk on the balls of

his feet – quite silently. He turned a sharp bend and saw a dim light in the distance. Slowly he crept the last few yards towards it and stopped in his tracks.

A large square room faced him. Steve shivered when he saw what it contained. It was ‘furnished’ like a medieval torture chamber. The walls were lined with spiked instruments of pain and leather whips. A line of vicious-looking clubs, the heads studded with rusty nails, covered one wall. In the middle of the room was an evil-looking rack. In one corner, completely out of place, was what looked like a mini-submarine, sitting on top of a sail-boat carrier.

Steve advanced into the room. He was so intent on looking around him that he failed to notice the trip wire before it was too late. With an agonising thud he hit the ground and was horrified to hear a mechanical whirring noise. He rolled over, but not quickly enough. A cage had crashed down from the top of the cavern and Steve found himself completely trapped by solid steel bars all round and above him. There was no escape!

Using every ounce of his bionic strength, he desperately tried to prise the bars apart.

“It’s no good, Steve, my dear. Even your strength couldn’t move them an inch.” Fiona’s voice had lost any softness it had previously had. It sounded as hard and as cold as the steel which trapped Steve.

“What the . . .”

“Perhaps I should explain,” interrupted Fiona. “After all, it can do no harm now. Tomorrow morning, your rather mutilated body will be washed up on the loch. I will radio Oscar and, tearfully and regretfully, tell him that the monster has struck again. You will gain immortality by becoming an entry in that Top Secret file of Oscar’s. Unfortunately, very few people will be able to read it, of course, but whenever someone does, the name of Steve Austin will be there.”

“What’s all this about?” rasped Steve.

“I’ll tell you,” said Fiona. “But I’ll have to be

brief. Mary’s expecting me for lunch at one, and you know how she hates unpunctuality. I daren’t be late.”

Steve looked at Fiona hard in the eye. “Do you mind if I sit down?”

“Make yourself comfortable. I’m sorry I can’t offer you anything to eat . . . what is it they say . . . the condemned man ate a hearty breakfast.” Fiona smiled, cruelly, as she talked. “Anyway, you may as well know what this is all about. I really am Lady Fiona. My father owned this place and all the land



around. And his father. And his father and so on for generations. We’ve always known that there were rich minerals around here. My great grandfather, the 12th Earl, discovered it by accident, but he loved the place so much he didn’t want to start mining. It would spoil it. My grandfather and father felt the same. And so do I. I was recruited by your government as a courier several years ago. My father, as well as loving this place was a great gambler and when he died I found that there was no money.”

"So you took a job as an air stewardess?" said Steve.

"Yes. It's a cheap way to see the world and it's really quite respectable. I won't bore you with the details of how I was recruited, but I was. Sometimes the messages I had to pass on were written, sometimes they weren't. The message about the uranium around here was one of the ones that wasn't. I passed the message on and waited for the geologists and divers to arrive. After that it was easy."

"Easy!" exclaimed Steve. "To kill people?"

Fiona's eyes glistened with hatred. "If you love somewhere as much as I love Blackadder, yes it's easy. Have you seen what the oil's done to the East Coast? Oil terminals, rigs, oil slicks. Towns and cities swallowed by greed. It will not happen to Blackadder."

"She's mad!" thought Steve.

"Anyway. It was easy to rig up a monster. A boat. Some rubber and some imagination. That's what the submarine's for, I can surface it and submerge at will."

"How can you buy a submarine?"

"With money, you can buy anything."

"But you said . . ."

"My father left me penniless. Yes. But with a bit of imagination and some of the information I was carrying was, I knew, bound to affect the prices of stocks in several

companies. I speculate. Very successfully."

A door slammed in the distance and the sound of footsteps was heard in the corridor. "That'll be my butler. He loves this place as much as I do. He was a very willing accomplice as well as a fine archer."

"You mean he killed the man I caught?"

"Yes. Poor Hamish. A good shot, but a big mouth. A pity, he was a good gamekeeper."

The butler came into Steve's view. Fiona looked up. "Ah. Innes," she said. I think the rack for Colonel Austin." She looked at Steve. "The others were dead before we put them on the rack. In your case I think we'll make an exception." Fiona drew a gun out of her pocket.

"When the cage opens, walk across to the rack very slowly."

"Why should I?"

"It is my experience that men will cling on to life for as long as possible. If you try anything, you will be dead before you reach the rack. If you don't, you will live a few minutes longer. Life is very sweet, Colonel."

With a slight whirr, the door opened and Steve walked slowly across the room. Fiona's gun was trained on him all the time. He lay down on it and felt Innes tie his hands and feet. Thinking that he was now helpless, Fiona put the gun on the floor. With a loud cranking and much groaning, the butler started the mechanism. Steve felt himself being pulled to his full extent. He felt the sweat on his brow. His arms felt as if they were being pulled from their sockets. The pain in his legs was excruciating. With a mighty surge of his bionic power, Steve pulled with all his might. The rack was very old. He felt the strain on his arms and legs lessen, and then with a mighty roar the wheel wrenched itself free from its socket. It flew through the air and struck the astonished butler full on the head. Steve averted his eyes from the pulpy mess that had once been a face.

Fiona screamed. In the distance a dinner gong sounded. In an instant Steve was free of his bonds and chasing Fiona along the





dank corridor to the trapdoor. She got to the foot of the stairs and was up them in a trice. Steve felt the power returning to his legs and bounded up the stairs in one mighty leap. Fiona was trapped. Behind her was Steve. In front, the lapping waters of the infamous loch. Without hesitation she plunged into the water and struck out with a powerful crawl, towards the opposite bank. What happened next, Steve never told anyone – not even Oscar.

The official report that he filed stated that Lady Fiona Blackadder and her butler Innes had mocked up a monster to account for the deaths of three American citizens, because Lady Fiona believed that if the Americans were allowed to file their reports, the land which they loved with an insane passion, would be spoilt for ever. Innes had died as the result of being struck by an object and Lady Fiona had tried to escape by swimming. The currents however, had sucked her under and she drowned.

The report was accurate in every detail apart from the fate of Lady Fiona. She was swimming strongly towards the shore when a strange, prehistoric looking animal had appeared from under the water. It was not an awesome beast. It looked like a large eel with a strange pointed head. It towered above the swimming figure and then turned and swam away, quite disinterested. Lady Fiona, however, looked up and saw the beast. Even before it had turned away her heart had stopped beating in a paralysis of fear. Her corpse sank to the bottom of the loch she had loved so much.

Steve rubbed his eyes in utter disbelief. He must have stood there for fully ten minutes, rooted to the spot. Suddenly he heard footsteps behind him. Mary was standing there, hands on hips, obviously fuming with anger.

"Is there nobody in this house coming for their lunch? You know I hate to see good food wasted!"

Dinner for Steve

"Angie? Steve Austin here." The Bionic man's deep brown voice purred down the 'phone. "I'm in town for a couple of hours and I thought it would be kinda nice to see you and take you to a show."

Angie thought for a second. "Why, Steve, that'd be just fine. Why not come here for a bite to eat first."

"Love to. See you in fifteen minutes," said Steve and hung up.

Angie looked at her watch. "Help!" she thought. "What can I cook in fifteen minutes?"

She flicked through her address book and dialled a number. The phone at the other end rang twice.

"Hello, 267 65 78992."

"Mary, it's Angie. How can I cook a meal for someone in fifteen minutes. Help! It's an emergency."

"Calm down," said Mary. "I assume that you've got a few basics in the larder?"

"I suppose so," sighed Angie, hopefully.

"How many's it for?"

"Two."

"Fine. Then he'll have Egg and Lemon Soup, Spaghetti Carbonara and Fresh fruit salad."

"What?"

"Get a paper and pencil, it won't take long."



Egg and Lemon soup

You need: two chicken stock cubes
a handful of rice
a lemon
an egg

Dissolve the stock cubes in boiling water and throw in the rice. Bring to the boil and turn down to simmer. When the rice is soft take a few spoonfuls from the pot into a mixing bowl. Add the juice of a lemon and one egg. Beat it up and return to the rest of the soup. Simmer for a few minutes and, hey presto, you've got a classic Greek soup to warm the heart of any fussy eater.

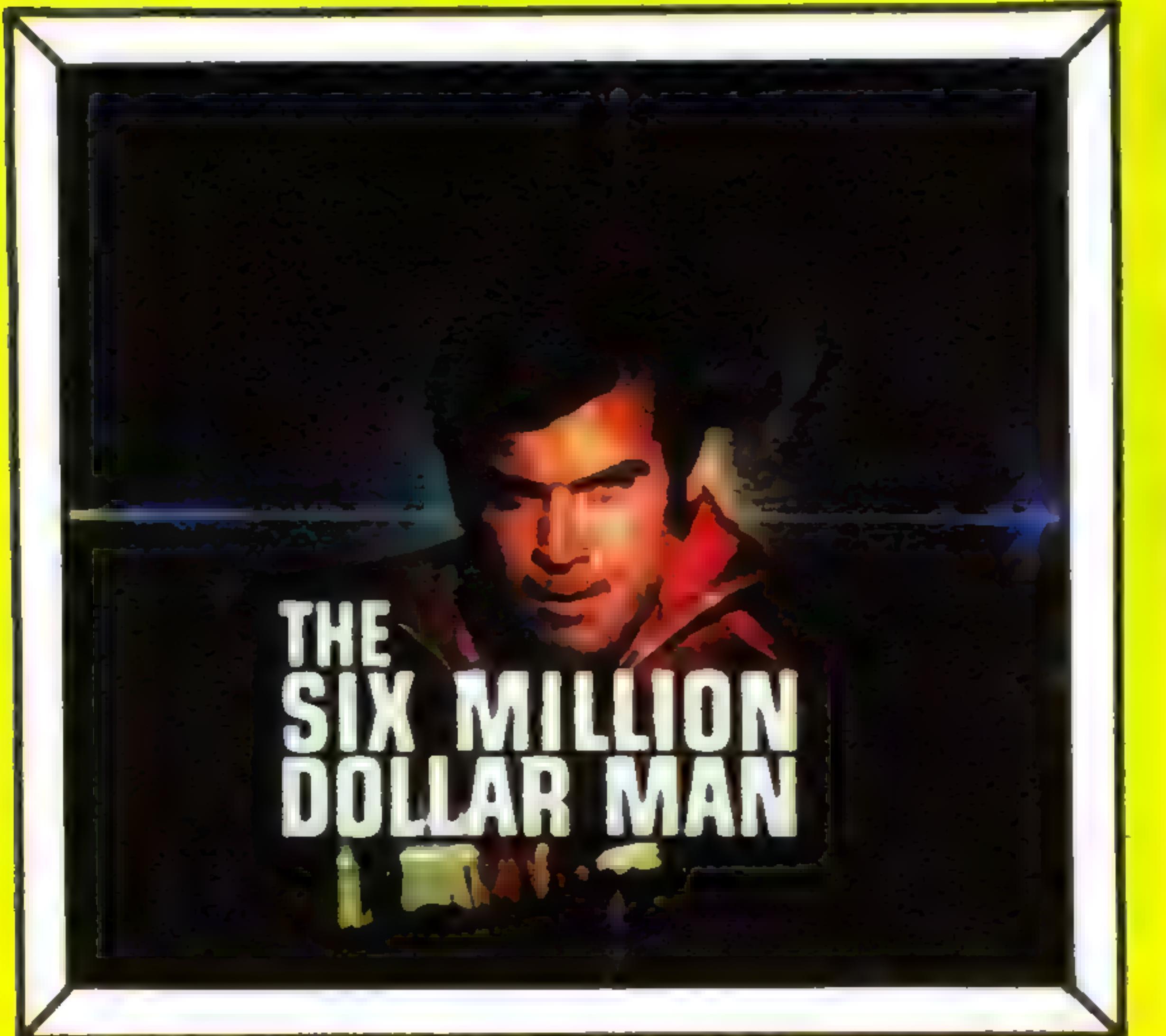
Spaghetti Carbonara

You need: About sixty strands of spaghetti
some bacon
some garlic
an egg
cooking oil

Boil some water in a saucepan and grab the pasta in your hand. Force the other end into the boiling water and press down, into the base of the saucepan. The spaghetti will become soft and as you keep pressing will easily fit into the saucepan. While the pasta is cooking on a simmer, chop up a clove of garlic and fry gently in the oil. Cut some bacon into strips and add to the frying pan. When the bacon is cooked the pasta should be ready. Whisk an egg in a jug. Strain the spaghetti and add the garlic and bacon. Pour the egg into the pasta and mix the pasta, bacon and egg. Serve immediately.

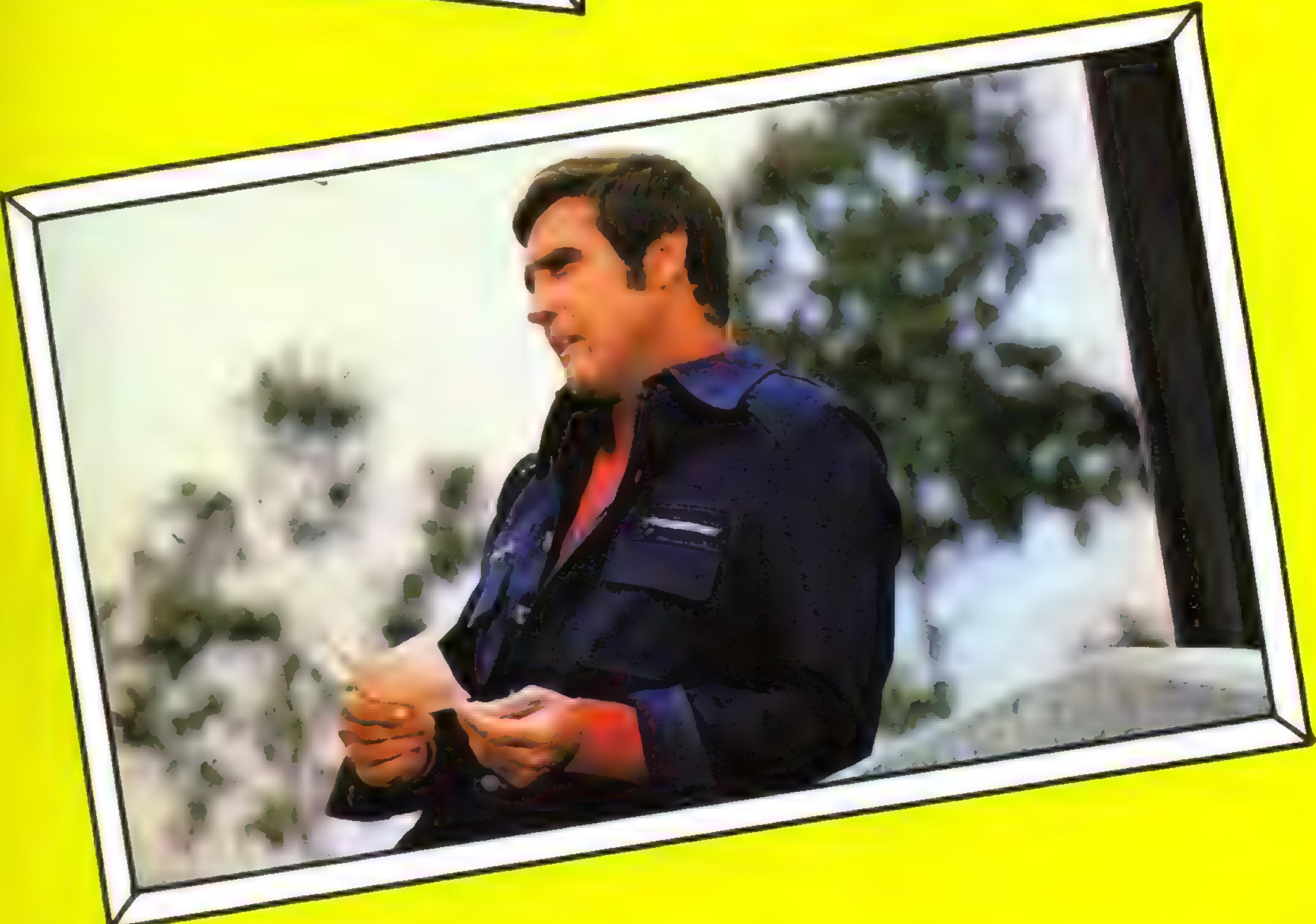
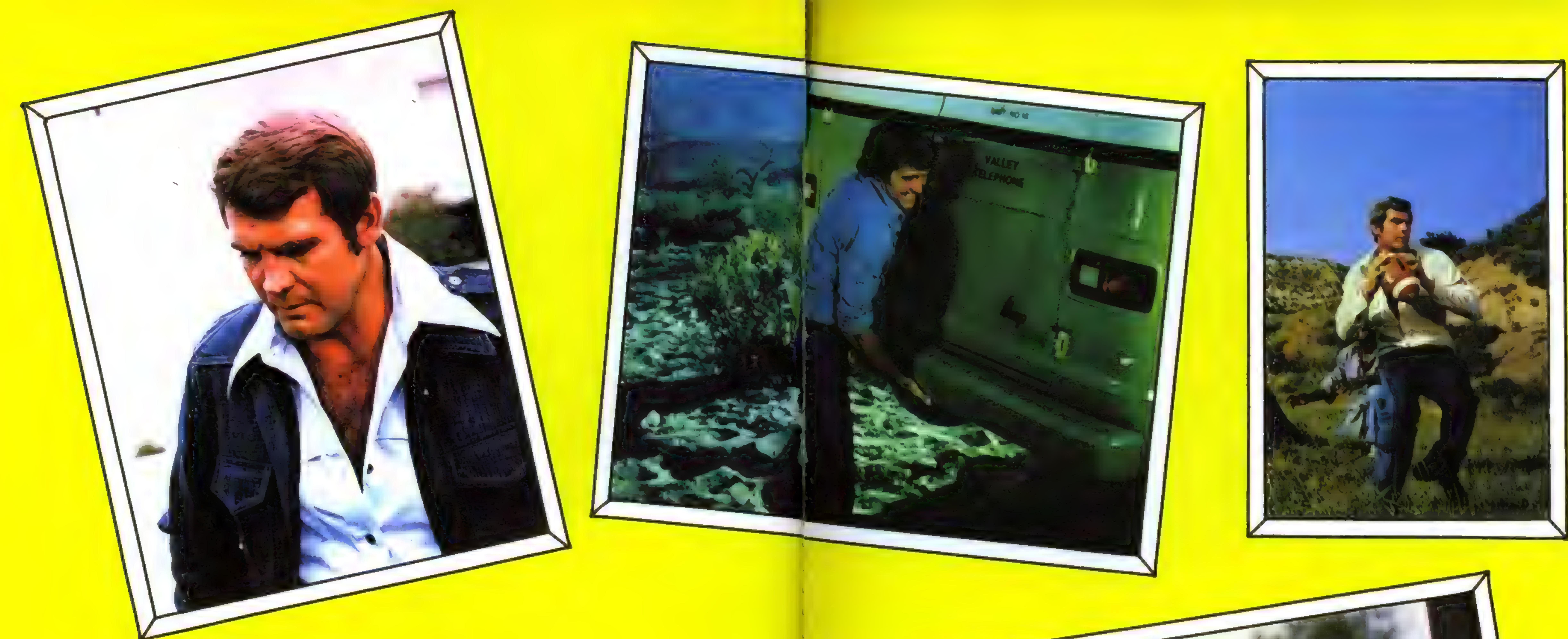
Fresh fruit salad

Peel all the fresh fruit you can find and chop it into equal pieces. Place it into a big mixing bowl and add a little honey and hot water and brown sugar. Stir like fury. Put it into the fridge and serve it chilled with fresh cream.



**THE
SIX MILLION
DOLLAR MAN**

Pictures to Remember



Steve's Diary

GET OUT OF BED
1

2

3

4

LINGER OVER BREAKFAST
5 MISS A THROW

6

7

8

9

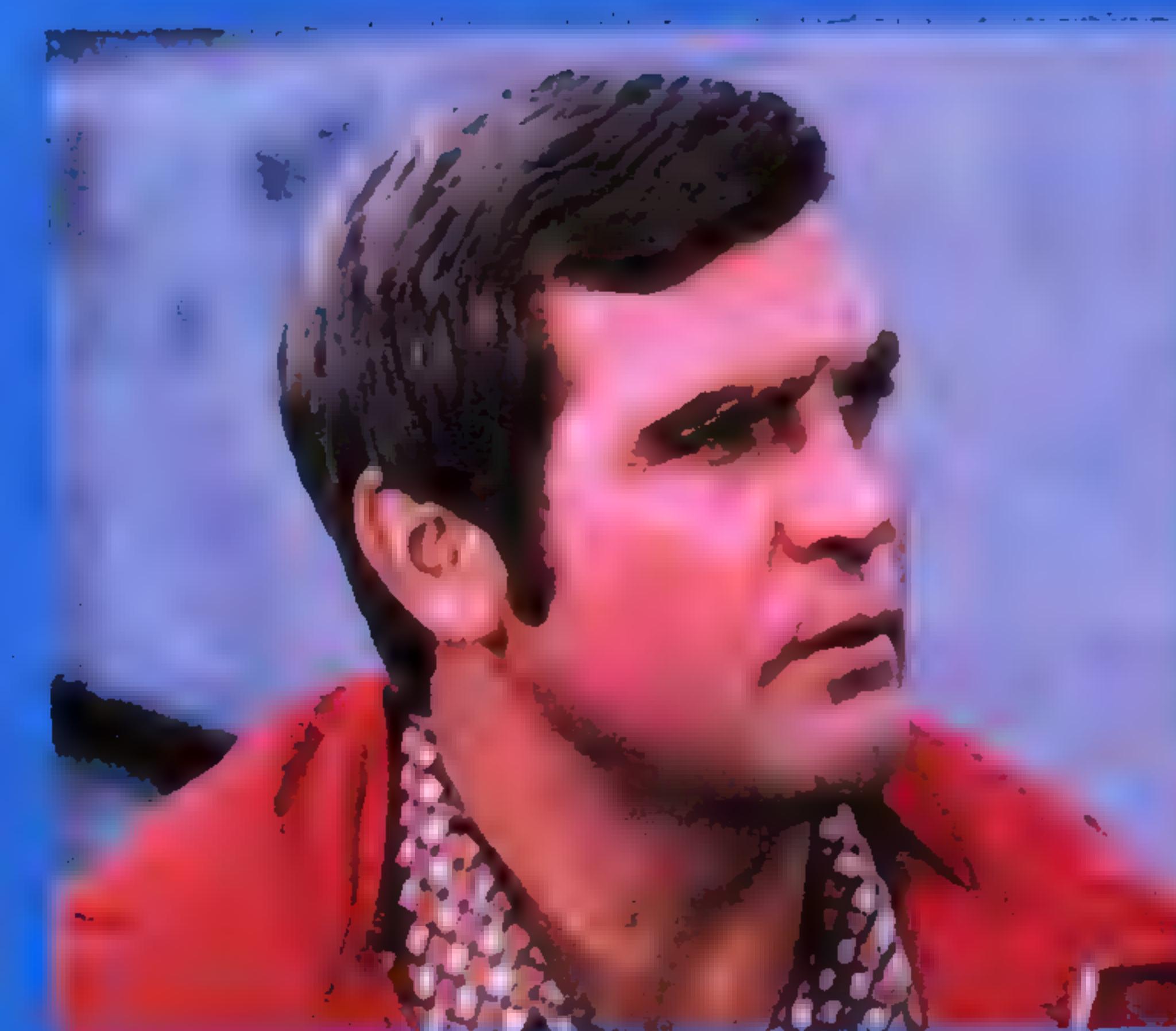
50 49 48 SEEING DOUBLE WITH BIONIC EYE
47 BACK TO 44 46 45 STAY FOR EYE REPAIR
44 MISS 2 TURNS 43

HOME FOR DINNER
51 ON TO 55

52
53
54

55
56 57 58 59

FORGET TO CLEAN YOUR TEETH
11 BACK TO 7



PHONE OSCAR AND ASK FOR HOLIDAY
60 MISS A THROW

OFF FOR BIONIC CHECK-UP
16 ON TO 19

12 13 14 15

17 18 19 20

CAR WON'T START
21 MISS A THROW 22 23

MALFUNCTION IN BIONIC LEG
24 MISS 2 THROWS

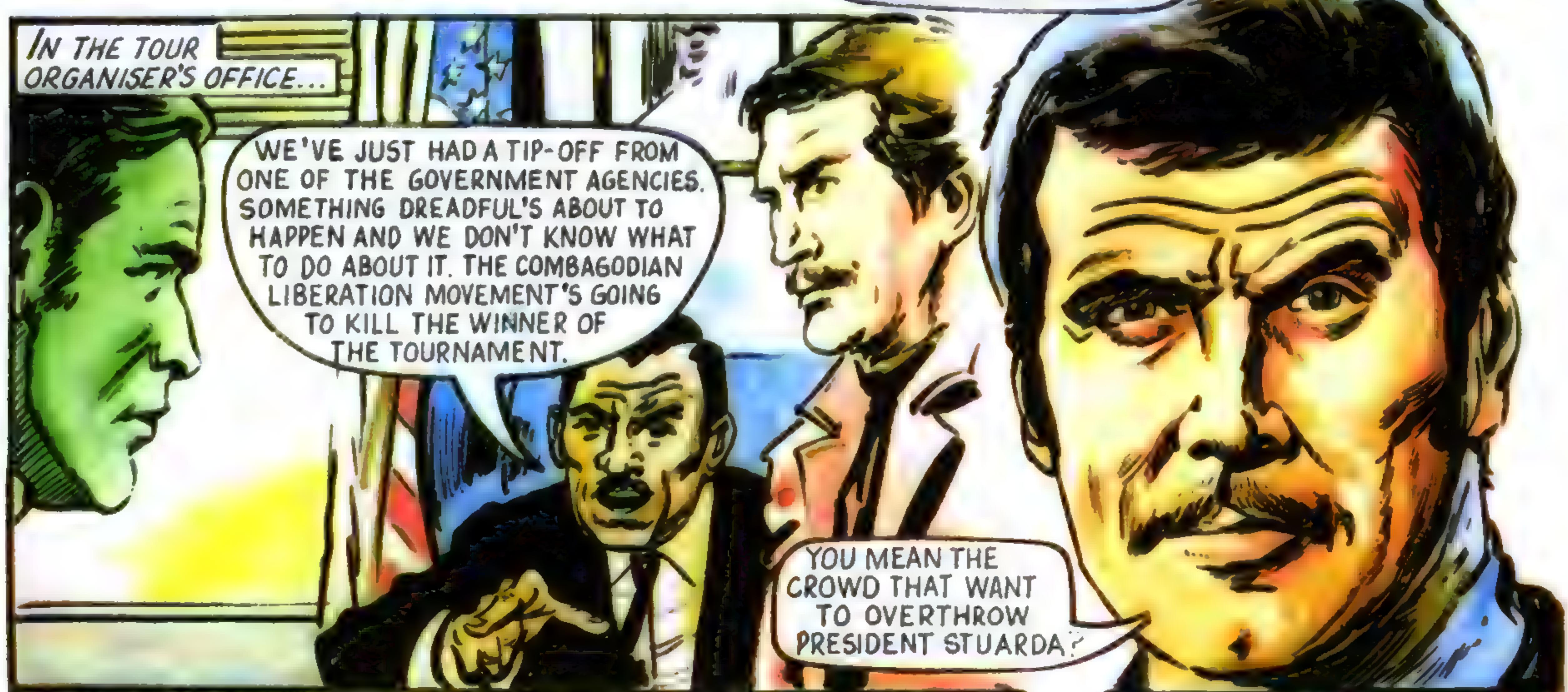
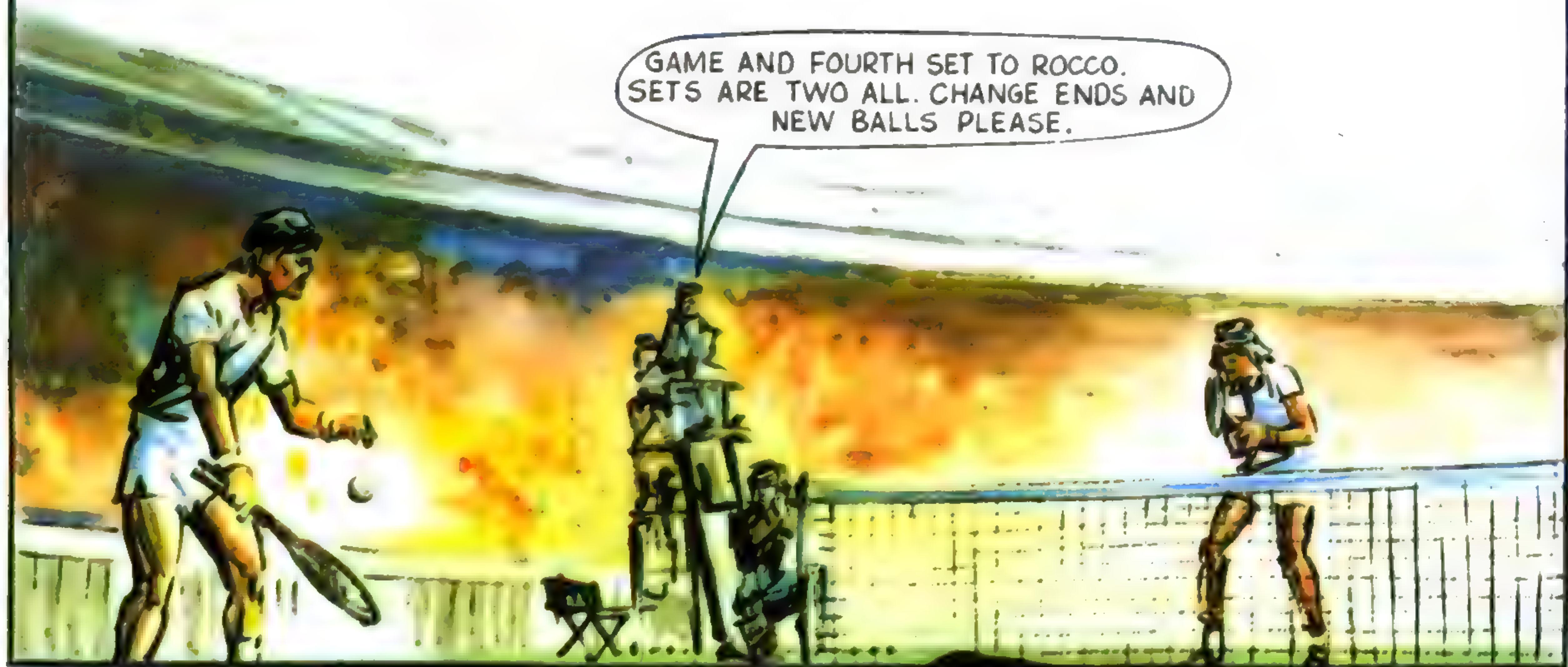
41	40	39	38	FORGET BRIEFCASE 37 BACK TO 33	36
MISSION SUCCESS 42 ON TO 45					35
76 OSCAR PHONES ABOUT ANOTHER 75 MISSION BACK TO 64	74				34
FINISH 77 ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL MISSION ACCOMPLISHED	73				33
FELL ASLEEP ON BEACH 72 BACK TO 68	71				32
GO TO MISSION BRIEFING 31 ON TO 35	70				30
	69				29
	68				28
	67				27
	66				26
	65				25
	64				
	63 CAUGHT PLANE FOR MIAMI - JUST! ON TO 67				
	62				
	61				
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	56				
	55				
	54				
	53				
	52				
	51 ON TO 55				
	50				
	49				
	48				
	47 BACK TO 44				
	46				
	45				
	44 MISS 2 TURNS				
	43				
	42 ON TO 45				
	41				

Rules for the Game

All you need to help Steve through his busy week is a dice and a counter for each player (up to 4 players). Take it in turns to throw the dice. Move your counters along according to the numbers thrown. You must throw a six to start and the exact number required to finish on 77.

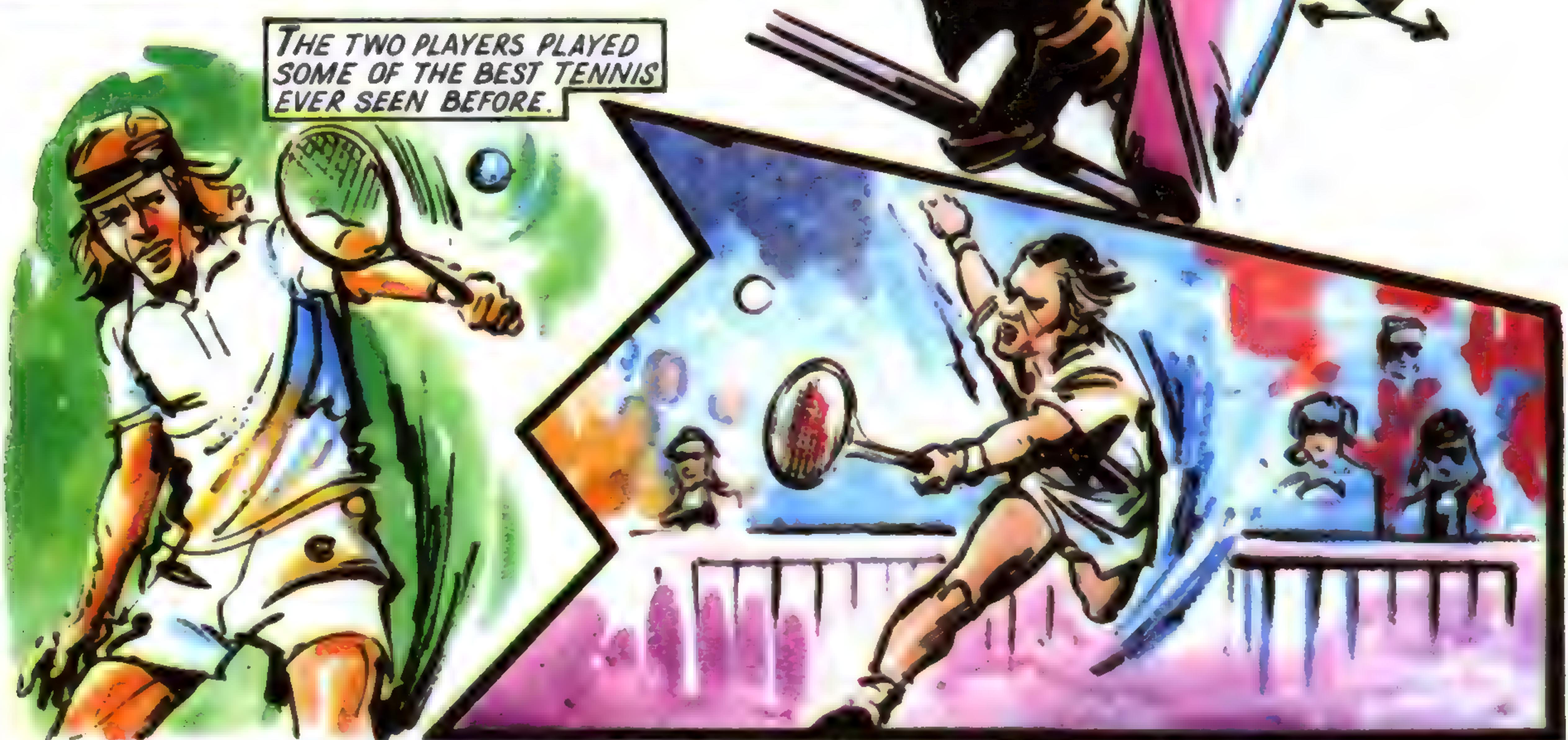
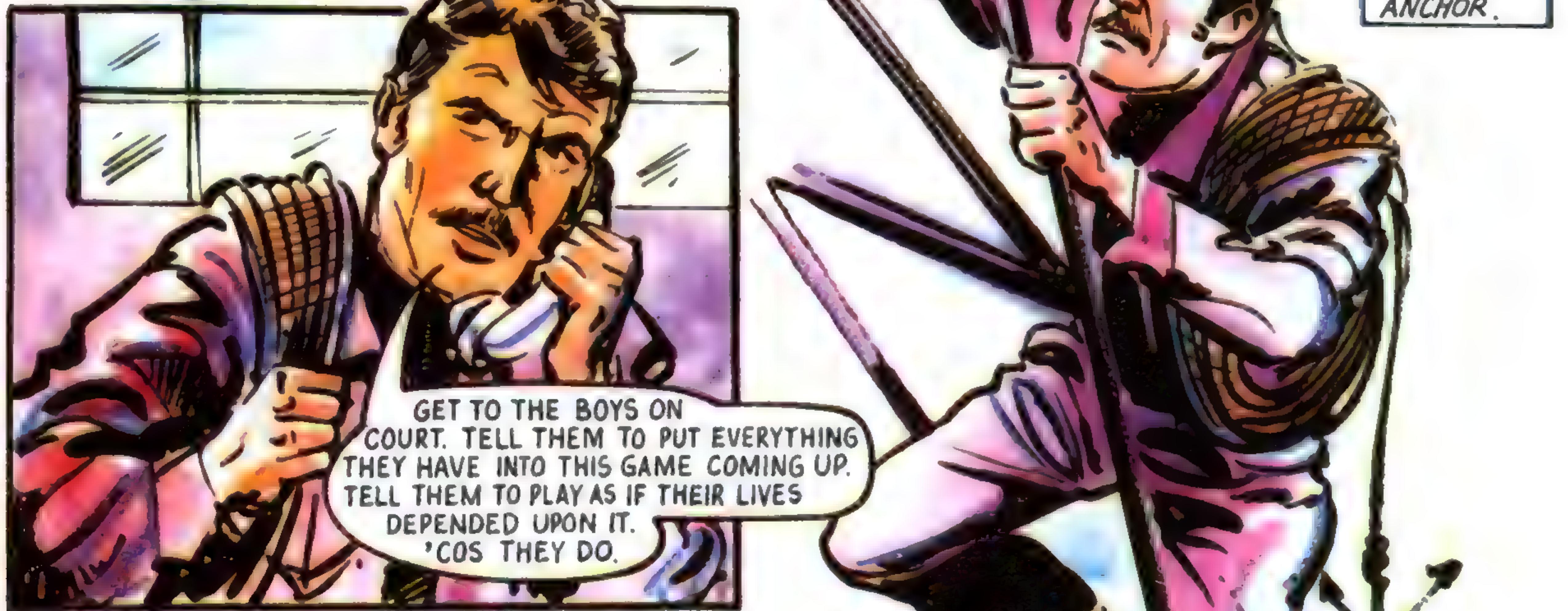
AT THE FINALS OF THE U.S. PRO-AM
TENNIS TOURNAMENT

SET TO KILL

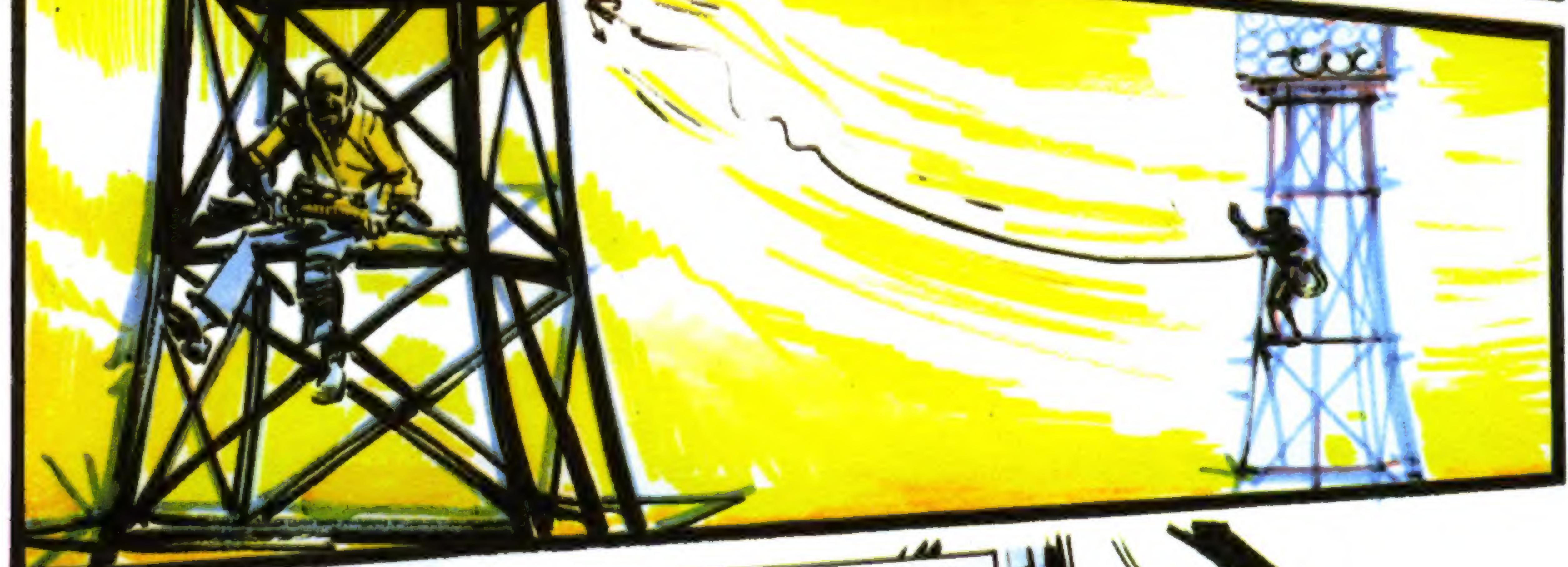








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The **Six Million Dollar Man**

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